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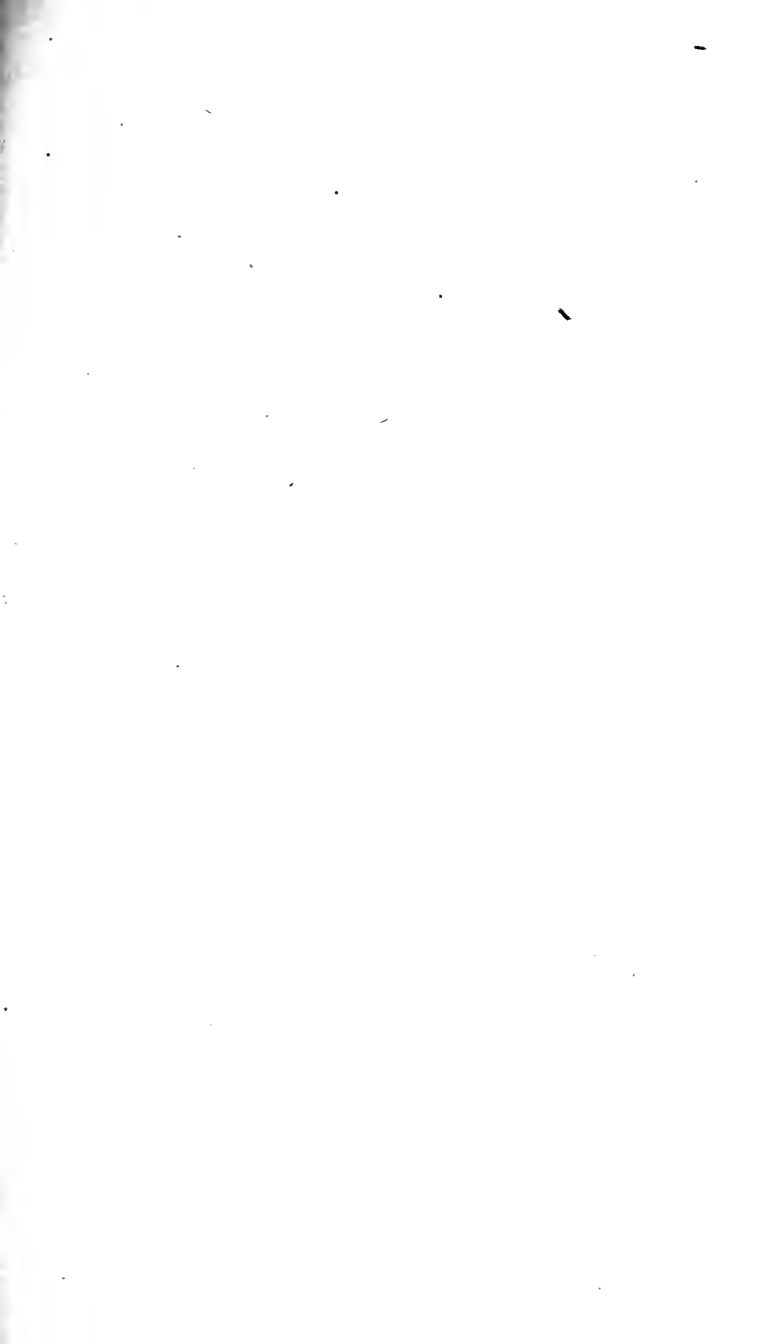
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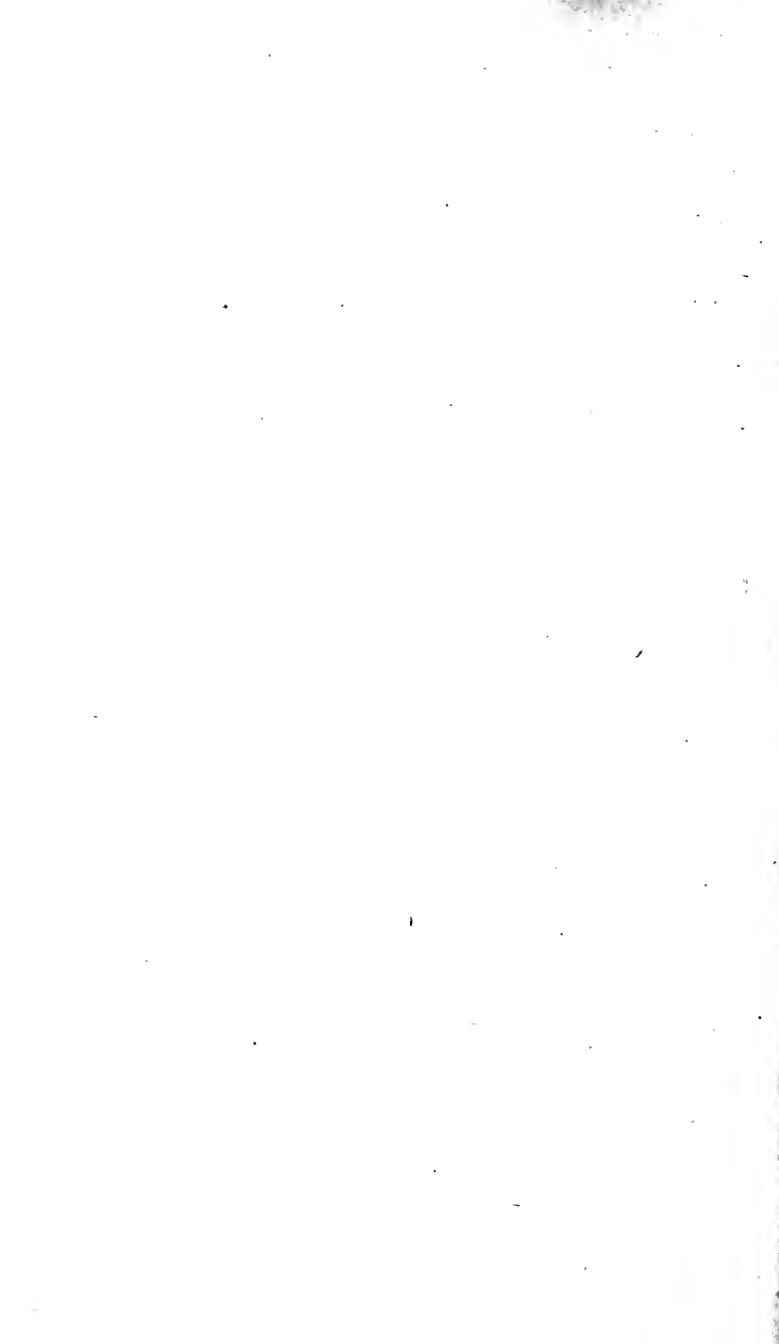
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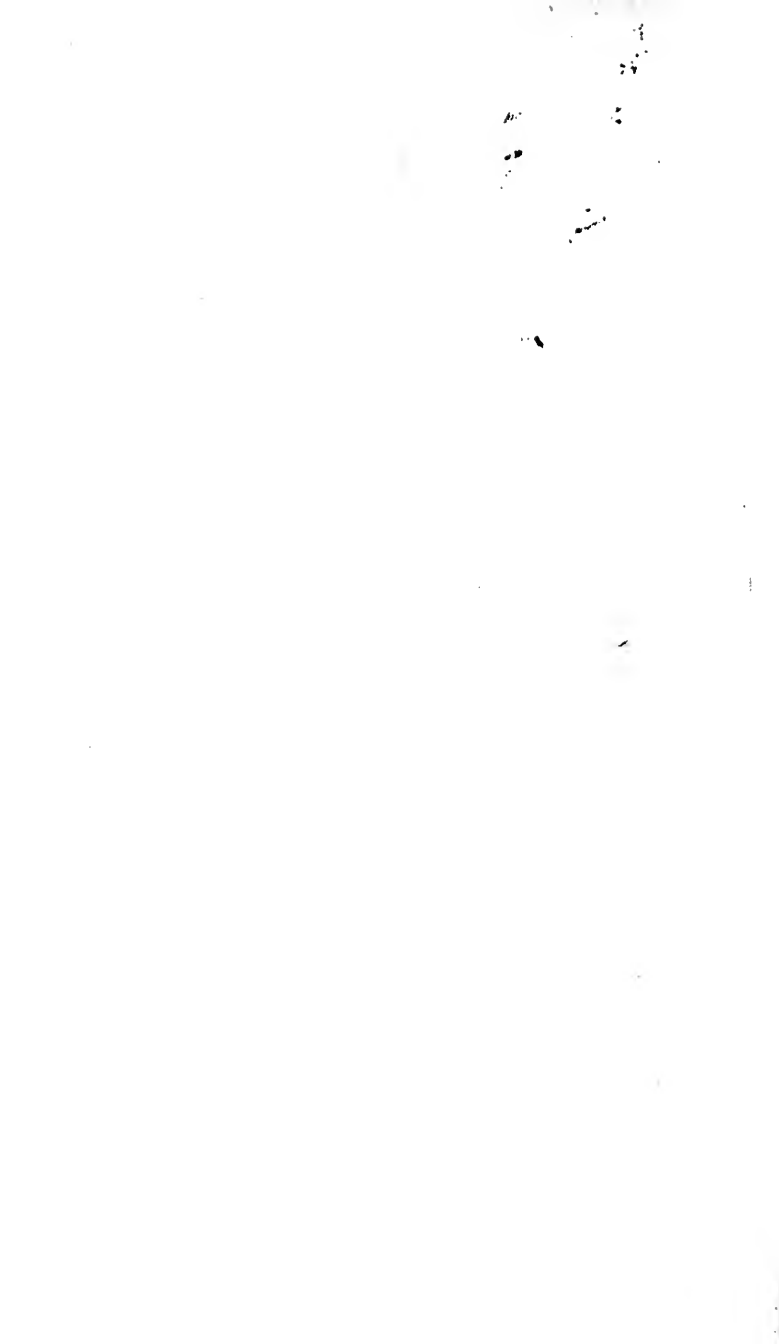
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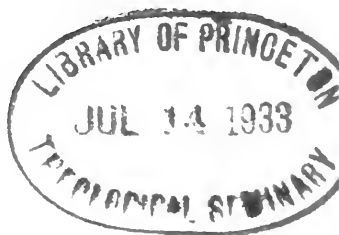
Servants of Christ







✓
SERVANTS OF CHRIST.



BY THE AUTHOR OF

“A BASKET OF BARLEY LOAVES,” ETC.. ETC.

“Our glory and nobility lies in this, that we are the servants
of Christ.”

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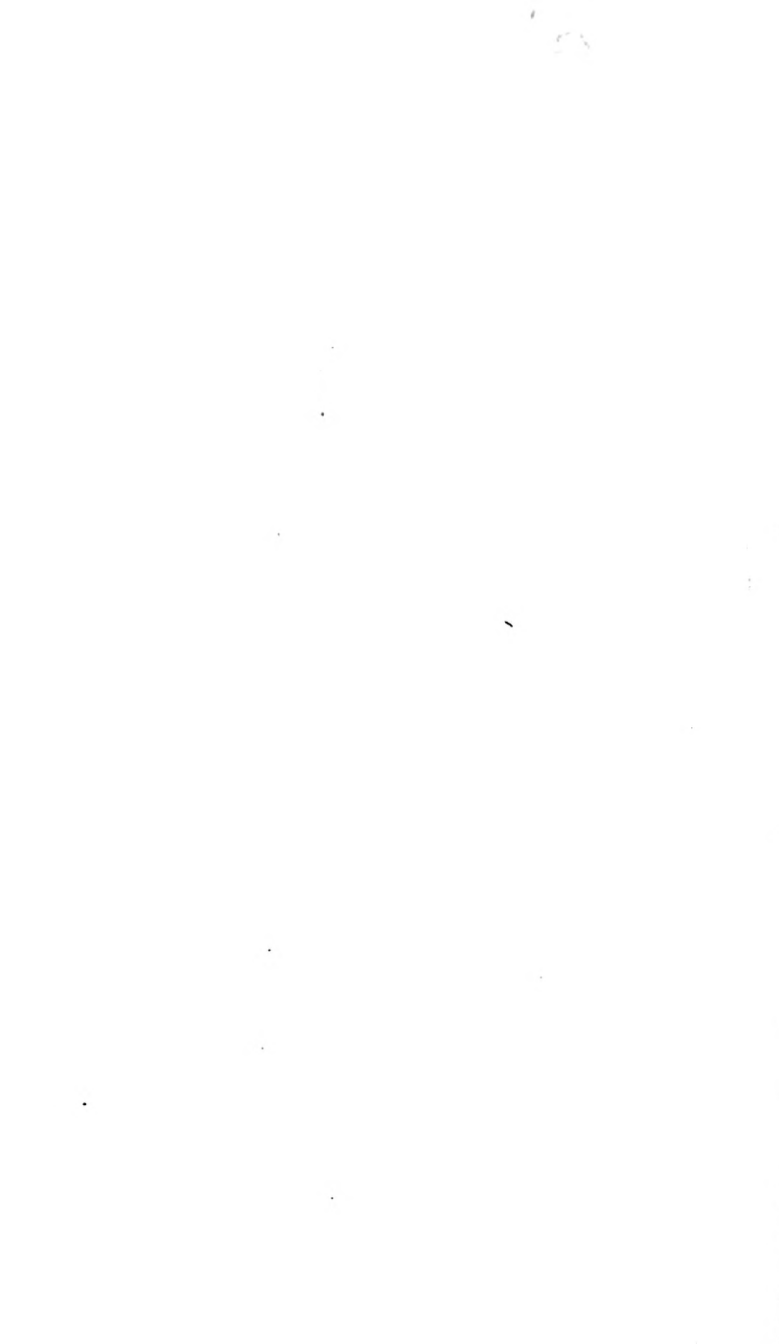
SUFFOLK CO., N. Y.

Affectionately Dedicated

TO MY

NIECES AND NEPHEWS,

*For Whom I Desire no higher Honor than
that They may be Servants
of Christ.*



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I.

INTRODUCTION.

TH E Martyrs' Monument in the Greyfriars' Church-yard draws visitors from many lands. "However deep," says Hugh Miller, "the snow may lie in Greyfriars' Church-yard, there is one path where the snow is always beaten down, and that leads to the monument of the Covenanters."

The path into which our subject leads is an oft-trodden path. Along this way many have gone, dropping brilliant thoughts and weighty arguments. We can not hope to add any thing new to what has already been

said, for we are "less than the least" and not worthy to be called a "servant of Christ." Nevertheless we love the service, and by God's help hope to remain in it, until the word of the Master turns our toils into triumphs.

. The very fact that this path has been so often trodden shows its importance. And like the travellers in the Greyfriar's Church-yard we may be sure there is something worthy of our attention at the end. Yes, something that stirs our whole soul, for there is the place

"Where Jesus of Nazareth stands;
The King of all kingdoms forever is he,
And he holdeth our crowns in his hands."

Not long ago a veiled statue stood before a newly-finished Library Hall connected with one of our literary institutions. The statue, wrought in

bronze, was a faithful representation of the liberal donor, and the building was the beautiful expression of his generosity.

On the eve of the dedication of the Hall a workman cleaning the base of the statue, had the curiosity to lift an end of the covering, when to his surprise he beheld the bronze image covered with white paint, and on the back a reproachful name was painted in large letters.

The news quickly spread; mysterious whispers were exchanged, and signs of secrecy were given. Some smiled, some sneered, others sighed to think the donor's memory was not more deeply revered.

Night fell, and busy hands worked silently until almost every trace of defacement disappeared. The veil was then replaced, and watchers were sta-

tioned to prevent a repetition of the injury.

Morning came, and friends gathered from far and near. At the proper time the veil was lifted, and words of eulogy were pronounced, while all eyes rested upon the likeness of the giver, whose living form had disappeared from among men.

One thought found frequent expression as the crowd slowly dispersed: "How fortunate that the discovery was made in time!"

It would indeed have been a great mortification to have unvailed the defaced image in the presence of the great assembly. Shouts of ridicule from those who gloried in meanness might have taken the place of grateful eulogy. But now the perpetrators withdrew in silence and shame; overhearing no doubt many remarks

not calculated to increase their self-respect.

As we sat down to write our simple essay this circumstance was suggested to our mind: and this was the train of thought into which we fell:

The time is drawing near when all the veils of earth shall be removed. How will we appear in that day? The veil of a public profession now screens many whose hearts wear no image of the heavenly. All are not Christ's who are called by his name; neither are all his who call upon his name. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord." How is it with us? Are we his? And if we are, is the likeness striking? Or does a thick coating of worldliness and selfishness mar the image until the resemblance is almost, if not quite lost? "Whose is the image?" wonderingly

inquires the beholder, as some professed disciple comes in sight. "The superscription is quite legible, but whose is the image?"

Dear Lord, let not this be said of me. Restore the image of thy fair creation, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." If the image is defaced let thy workmen silently but effectually work through the night of earthly toil and suffering until "the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Then when we stand before the throne, in the presence of an assembled world, we will not fear to have the disguises of earth torn away, for we shall bear "the image of the heavenly."



II.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANS.

THE original copy of the Declaration of Independence, which has been in the Patent Office at Washington for years, has so faded that the signatures are scarcely visible; and a skilled penman has been requested to go over the document, with the aid of a strong microscope, and retrace all the signatures, making them distinct and legible.

The author of "Urbane and His Friends" has brought before us a group of earnest disciples, desiring greater conformity to their living Lord. They meet weekly in the study of their

pastor ; and converse freely upon the subject nearest their hearts. Their pastor, longing to have them reach the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, assures them that "Christ can infuse life into dry bones, and warmth into stones:" and while he is willing and glad to give them the results of his rich experience, tells them ; "I would fain have you learn from the direct teachings of the Spirit far more than I know."

Saddened to find that the lineaments of their Lord are scarcely visible in them, they are not entirely disheartened ; but address themselves directly to study the characteristics of the apostolic Christians, who confessedly are the brightest reflections of "The Lord our Righteousness."

"Oh, do you expect to find apostolic piety anywhere at the present

day?" "Why not?" replies the pastor; "Christ belongs to our own day as well as to the past; and where he is, there you will find his disciples." "We have the same opportunities they had to grow up into Christ Jesus." "As to spiritual gifts I believe we get exactly what we want."

With these and similar words the leader encourages his little flock. Let us now sit down with them at the feet of those early Christians who followed their Lord so closely.

The apostolic Christians were humble. "Stand up: I myself also am a man." Refusing strange honors at Lystra; saying so earnestly; "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you."

By "sailing with a low sail" they avoided many "perils in the sea."

They were steadfast; continuing

“steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” By steadfastness they gained a great advantage every way over those “unstable souls” who wrest the scriptures “unto their own destruction.” By fellowship they acknowledged the principle: “Union is strength.”

Prayer and praise were their delight: and whether breaking bread at the Lord’s table, or eating their ordinary meals at home, they had “gladness and singleness of heart,” because Christ was “the hidden man of the heart,” and their joy no man could take from them. Whether therefore they ate or drank, they did all to the glory of God: and they were already drinking from that fountain of joy that springs from the presence of Christ, and faileth never,—because the “liv

ing waters" that "go out from Jerusalem" flow "in summer and in winter" and in the "drought and heat" that "consume the snow-waters" of earth: so that one having these need "not be careful in the year of drought," remembering that "every thing shall live whither the river cometh." These are the same waters of which the prophet speaks so joyfully: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

"Having favor with all the people" looks at first sight rather startling, for we remember the Master said: "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." But the offence of the cross had not yet commenced, for though the Lord had been crucified his doctrine had not yet

met with regularly organized opposition. And simple, pure, upright Christian lives often excite the admiration of those who fail to understand or believe in the source whence flow these beautiful streams.

They were contented. "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content:" showing most beautifully to the world what a satisfying portion Christ is to his people.

They were full of love. "As touching brotherly love," writes Paul, "ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." And this love that wrought outwardly much good, contained a blessing in its bosom for the happy possessor, because it was a pledge of life and a constant token that all was well within the soul: "We know that we have passed from

death unto life, because we love the brethren."

They were loyal to their Lord. Not only in the temple but also "in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Out of the abundance of their hearts' love their mouths spoke of Him, whose they were, and whom they served: for they served "the Lord Christ."

They were forgiving. Remembering always the prayer of The Crucified they too learned to say from the heart: "Father, forgive them:" "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge;" thus turning the hour of persecution and peril into the hour of power and triumph; blotting out their own innate propensity: "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," they triumphed openly over depraved human nature, nailing it to the cross; and

one at least "as a prince" had "power with God, and with men," and prevailed; for it is hardly too much to say with Augustine; "the Church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen."

They did not please themselves. Or to speak more correctly, they learned to find all their joy in pleasing Christ. Before they passed from their service to their reward they had this testimony that they pleased their Master, because they obeyed in all things, "not with eye-service," "but in singleness of heart." And when from earth they passed into the skies we can easily imagine the welcome of the Master, as he took each one into his joy.

They believed in the power of prayer. Though once the praying church was greatly astonished at the sight of released Peter standing on the threshold, and even Rhoda could

hardly credit her ears "when she knew Peter's voice," yet the apostolic Christians wielded most wonderfully the weapon of "all-prayer," as the records of the early church clearly show. In answer to their prayers many prisoners' chains were loosed, and many gates opened. And though Herod might stretch forth his hands and vex many, nevertheless "the word of God grew and multiplied."

They were full of faith, and by its power performed "great wonders and miracles among the people."

They were always progressing; giving "all diligence, adding to their faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity."

What think you of these "cedar-trees from Lebanon?" They were "planted in a good soil by great waters," and being planted, prospered; and neither great power nor many people could pluck them up by the roots.

Here stands one, grandest of all, though "his bodily presence" was "weak, and his speech contemptible." Fruitful in good works, with branches of tender sympathy embracing the whole world, was there ever such a beautiful tree as this in "the garden enclosed?" "In labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft;" beaten with rods; stoned; "in perils of waters, in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils

in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness:” determined to know nothing “save Jesus Christ, and him crucified:” “ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” Paul proved himself a “servant of Christ;” and could say in all sincerity: “for me to live is Christ.”

But why discourage us by holding up such a peerless pattern?

Did it ever occur to you that you have the same reason for loving your Lord that Paul had? Concerning Christ this servant said: “Who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Can you say less? Concerning his own life he said: “For me to live is Christ.” Ought you to say less? Had Paul any

weightier reasons for self-consecration than you have, or *ought* to have? Is that noble life never to be repeated? Thank God! it is repeated! His devotion to his Lord has borne fruit in many lives.

In his autobiography Dr. Guthrie tells how he endeavored to trace a relationship with the Guthries of martyr memory. He failed in this, but always believed the effort did him good; for something of their spirit fell upon him, shedding its influence over his whole life, determining him to suffer, if need be, for the rights of Christ's crown and the liberties of his Church. Certainly something of this spirit rested on Dr. Guthrie when, in the Disruption of 1843, he took so decided a stand. It was something of which to be proud to be able to point to the Martyr's Monument in the Greyfriars'

Church-yard in Edinburgh, and, reading that quaint inscription, "Famous Guthrie's head," tell the stranger, "He was my ancestor." But better still is it to reproduce the spirit of the martyr in a less conspicuous, but perhaps not less useful life.

And though we may fail to trace any resemblance between ourselves and the great apostle, and may almost be ready to conclude that we hardly belong to the same family, yet unconsciously in our great admiration we may be led into humble imitation, and thus reproduce his qualities in our more obscure lives. When one of Urbane's friends exclaimed; "I shall never be a Saint Paul!" Urbane replied; "Of course not. You are not called to be another man, but to make the best of the man God has committed to your charge."



III.

THE MASTER WE SERVE.

“LET me speak of my Master,” said Dr. Guthrie. “I have served him for more than thirty years: my head has become gray in his service; but I can say, even when I saw how much richer I might have become in other professions, and when I felt the greatest hardships of my own, I never regretted my choice. I have been a poor servant; I have a thousand infirmities on my head, and sins on my conscience, for which I look for pardon only through the blood of Christ; but poor servant as I have

been, I can stand up this night for my Master, and say Christ has been a good and blessed and gracious Master to me."

"A master gives his servant work to do," writes another, "but he can not give him strength to work: but God as he cuts us out work, so he gives us strength. "My strength shall be made perfect in weakness."

"Give thy strength unto thy servant," O Christ my Lord, "whose I am, and whom I serve."

The question has frequently been asked; "Why does Christianity exert so little practical influence even in countries nominally Christian?"

For the sake of bringing the matter home to each heart we ask a closer question: "Why do *we* exert so little Christian influence?" And we answer, because we do not realize the

power we possess, or *may* possess, if we live *in* Christ. "Christ liveth in me," writes Paul the apostle, "and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Or as Luther renders it: "The very life that I live is Christ himself; and therefore Christ and I, in this matter, are altogether one thing."

The word "Christian" in the German language has a significance scarcely thought of by us. The word used is simply "Christ." What an idea that gives us of the oneness of the servant with his master. And does it not suggest another thought? Are we walking on the earth as he walked? "With the Lord living in his people there ought to be as many Christ's walking upon the earth as there are redeemed ones," said Dr. Arnot.

"Christian! No man would ever

have asked a more significant name, if the church had remained true to its head."

"With the early Christians the cross was to own themselves the disciples of Christ: it was this step that cost. The cross with us is not there: it is easy for us to own his name; the difficulty lies in so following him that our lives shall not be a continual reproof."*

When Christ "took upon him the form of a servant," he exalted the word and the office for evermore. That was a strange scene in "the large upper room," when the Master rose from the table, "laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself." We can easily imagine the wondering looks and whispered

* Dr. Arnot.

words of the twelve. And when he silently "poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded," no wonder if they all shrank back, hesitating to allow their Lord to perform this menial service for them: no marvel Peter cried: "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

This act was typical of the life-service of Christ. "I am among you as he that serveth."

Let us keep our eyes fixed upon our Great Example; for, to quote the language of another;* "we are not so good nor so useful as we might be because we do not set the Lord always before us. We are lean and ill-favored, and our work lingers, because

* Rev. A. Dickson.

men become our models. We are content if we may be as heavenly-minded as some of those ancient worthies "who through faith and patience inherit the promises." But the best of men are not good enough to set us an example; and we have a higher calling than to be like Job or Jeremiah or James or John: we are called to be like Jesus. Even Paul, with all his attainments in holiness, would not have us follow him except so far as he followed the perfect, peerless pattern; "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

"Wouldst thou bring a world unto God? Then live near to him thyself. If divine life pervade thine own soul, every thing that touches thee will receive the electric spark, though thou mayst be unconscious of being charged therewith. This surely would be the

highest, to strive to keep near the holy, not for the sake of our own reward here or hereafter, but that through love to God we might bless our neighbor."*

"The true missionary spirit," wrote Pres. Finney, "is true sympathy with the spirit of Christ."

"In nature, the shallowest lake, provided it be full, sends up as many clouds to heaven as the deepest, for the same sunlight beams equally on both their bosoms. This law may often be seen at work in the spiritual kingdom. 'Glory to God in the highest' rises in a stream as strong and pure from a sinner saved who lays out one talent in a lowly sphere, as from a sinner saved who wields ten talents in the sight of an applaud-

* Mrs. Child.

ing world. Nay, more: as a lake within the tropics, though shallow, gives more incense to the sky than a polar ocean of unfathomable depth, so a Christian of few gifts, whose heart lies open fair and long to the Sun of Righteousness, is a more effectual witness than a man of greater capacity who lies not so near, and looks not so constantly to Jesus.* Some happy souls having learned what Jesus is able to do for his workers, are putting forth such herculeanean efforts that beholders wonderingly exclaim: "Tell us, we pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth?" But they understand not the answer when it is given: because it is "spiritually discerned," and "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit."

* Dr. Arnot.

“I saw plainly,” says Henry Varley, “that such an experience, the realized power of an indwelling Christ, must be (to use a mechanical figure) like exchanging hand-power for steam.”

“Every thing depends upon the power,” he adds. “I went to Liverpool the other day in five hours, with three stoppages only. Of course I had no desire to say to the friend who met me in Lime Street, ‘What ability I have! I have come from London in so little time.’ I put it all down to the energy of the engine at the front of the train.”

Our “help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.” “We are not straightened in Him.”

“I am the light of the world” was uttered long ago; and Christ’s disciples thought they understood all it meant. Scientific men have long told

us that light in itself has no mechanical force. But the delicate experiments of Mr. Crookes seems to overthrow this long-accepted theory. He has contrived an ingenious apparatus which shows the power of luminous rays to drive around a little vane, after sifting out the heat by means of an alum screen.

Thus light is not only the illumination of all life, but also a living force.

Some Christians are learning the power of those luminous rays that come directly from the Sun of Righteousness. Rising above the earth-clouds into the highlands of consecrated living where Jesus shines more directly upon the receptive soul, they find this divine light a motive force.

And as recent discoveries have revealed the fact that we are 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 miles nearer the sun than

we thought; so these upland-dwelling souls find themselves nearer their Sun than they ever before dreamed. And the great beauty of this is they become so luminous through borrowed light that others are attracted. Dwellers in the lowlands are amazed when they read words like the following: and some are constrained to follow the leaders up into the blessed sunshine.

“In this present evil world there are regions of bliss that may be reached by every Christian. There are lands of Beulah where the air is very sweet and pleasant, and the sun is always shining, and the birds are ever singing. There are high mountains apart where, dwelling with Jesus, we are already in heaven.”

“My dear Jesus is the delight of my life, and the life of my delights. His smiling face is the sunshine of my

heart, and His near presence makes me happy all the day long and all the year round: and, when waking in the watches of the night, 'My meditation of him shall be sweet.'"

"Jesus, thy name to me is balm, and better every way than the balm of Gilead, because it heals the hurt in the heart, soothes the wounded spirit, and calms the troubled mind. It is life and light and love and peace and 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' It is more refreshing than the wells of Elim and the dew of Hermon, and pleasanter and far more cheering than 'the wine of Lebanon, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.' It is 'an alabaster box of very precious ointment' that never can be broken and poured out till nothing remains. It is an anthem which never can be rendered in

all its melodiousness by the 'hundred and forty and four thousand,' with their harps of gold, assisted by the choir of angels. It is a hive of honey higher than heaven, deeper than hell, 'the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea,' and its boundless stores of sweetness never can be exhausted."*

"Christ is every thing he is described to be by His most ardent lovers," writes St. Augustine; "yea, far more, for are we not told that joy in Him is unspeakable?"

* "All about Jesus." By Rev. A. Dickson.



IV.

REASONS FOR SERVING.

RECENTLY a Hindoo convert passed from earth to heaven after fifteen years of service. He was a member of the lowest division of the lowest caste in India. In his family and village he stood alone for Christ, quietly enduring much persecution, preaching Christ everywhere on all his business journeys, and as the record tells us, well-deserved his name, Yesuthasan, which signifies; “servant of Christ.”

Philologists differ regarding the derivation of the word “liege,” one tell-

ing us it comes from "ligare," to bind: another tracing its origin to "ledig," free.

The word "servant," while its derivation remains undisputed, may be looked at from such different standpoints that it seems like two words of diverse meaning: for to some it speaks of degrading servitude; to others of glorious liberty. How does it appear to you? Do you count it joy and honor to say: "O Lord, truly I am thy servant?"

And what think you of Christian service? Do you ask: "Why should we serve?"

The lives of some Christians answer; "Because we can not help it." So natural and easy seems their service. "Why do rivers flow down the mountain sides upon the parched plains? They must flow down by the law of

their being.” “When a polished gem receives a sunbeam on its surface, it is under a natural necessity of spreading out its light in all directions. And so a human soul that receives the light of life from the face of Jesus is under law to let that light shine before men. ‘Freely ye have received, freely give.’* “I have set thee to be a light.”

We have also the command of Christ, whose design we believe is that we begin to work as soon as we begin to worship: accepting the privations as early as the privileges. We use the word “privations” out of regard to young Christians, whose first acts of service often involve much self-denial. As they advance in the service they will find the privileges far

* Dr. Arnot.

outweigh the privations; "but the first step costs."

No matter what it costs, the command to work is very plain. You heard the voice of Jesus say: "Come unto me." You came. That same voice says: "Go work to-day in my vineyard." Will you go? "Arise, he calleth thee."

Under the "Articles of War," we find that the punishment for disobedience of orders *in the presence of the enemy* is death.

The order comes to *all*; though all are not called to the same work. "The simple fact that a Christian is on earth and not in heaven, is proof that there is something for him to do; and if he is not doing it, the neglect shows either that he is not yet a Christian indeed, or that he is a Christian who grieves Christ. A broken limb

hurts him who owns it more than if it were completely severed from his body. Thus the Lord is hurt by those who, being his members, do not witness for him." *

St. Bernard was in the habit of constantly asking himself: "Bernard, for what purpose art thou here?"

"You have a post, a watch to keep—
Betray it not—he dares not sleep
Who trims the lonely light-house lamp,
Or guards the fortress or the camp
From footsteps of the foe."

Christ has a right to our service.

"Just as Jesus, with all that he has belongs to us, so we ourselves, and all that we have, belong to him. We are not our own in any sense. We belong to Christ by reason of our two creations. We were born for him, and

* Dr. Arnot.

we were born again for him. Besides, we were bought by him. The kind kinsman-redeemer first 'purchased' Ruth, the stranger, herself, then he claimed the field and the inheritance. So Christ claims all our possessions: and if only we could love him as he loves us, his claims would never be disputed; but all our title-papers would be laid a free-will offering on his altar, and with our money he might be pleased to make wings for his angels, 'having the everlasting Gospel to preach' to all nations."*

When Benhadad sent messengers to Ahab, saying: "Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine:" the abject answer to this insulting message was: "My lord, O king, accor-

* "All about Jesus," Rev. A. Dickson.

ding to thy saying, I am thine, and all that I have.”

Under the circumstances the answer was servile in the extreme. But when our King Emmanuel says: “I have redeemed thee, thou art mine,” the case is very different; and it becomes our highest honor to render “unto God the things that are God’s.” “Let the redeemed of the Lord say:” “We are thine, and all that we have is thine.”

When Cyrus took the king of Armenia and his son Tigranes, with their wives and children, prisoners, and upon their humble submission gave them their liberty and their lives, in their return home, as they were all commending Cyrus, Tigranes asked his wife, “What thinkest thou of Cyrus? Is he not a comely and a proper man, of a majestic presence?” “Truly,”

she said, "I know not what manner of man he is: I never looked upon him." "Why," said he, "where were thine eyes all the while? Upon whom didst thou look?" "I fixed mine eyes," she said, "all the while upon him," meaning her husband, "who, in mine hearing, offered to Cyrus to lay down his life for my ransom."

It was an ancient custom among the Highlanders in Scotland when one clan wished to call all the others to avenge its wrongs, to take a wooden cross, dip it in blood, and send it by a special messenger through all the clans. This was called the fire-cross, because at sight of it, each clan lighted a fire or beacon, which gave notice to all the adjoining clans that a general rising was immediately to take place.

Beloved in Christ, behold the cross on Calvary.

“Did our youth, some years ago, leave titles, estates, luxurious mansions, kind fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, and blooming brides, to throw themselves on the shores of the Black Sea, and face frost and famine, pestilence and the iron shower of death, before the walls of Sebastopol? And shall piety blush before patriotism? Shall Jesus call in vain for less costly sacrifices?”*

The necessities of those around us call loudly for our service. Some are so moved by this call that they overwork until they fall exhausted, like Phineas Stowe of the Boston Baptist Bethel, whose pathetic cry in his last hours was: “I have a great work to do.” Others sit with folded hands; “am *I* my brother’s keeper?”

* Dr. Guthrie.

We are told by those who have escaped shipwreck or fire at sea, that the agonizing cry of the perishing rang in their ears for weeks and months. We have read of a shipwreck when hundreds perished, and a wail of woe, faint but fearful, reached the shore, curdling the blood of all who heard it.

The calmness of some ought to affect us no less than the terror of others; for in the midnight wreck the sleeper perishes as surely as he who vainly seeks the overcrowded life-boat.

“I can not bring myself to fear death, as I suppose I ought,” said Thaddeus Stevens: “for according to the creed under which I was reared, I am in sore peril.” When asked to what creed he referred, he replied: “The Orthodox, which teaches that without regeneration there is no salvation. My mother was a Baptist, and so good a woman

that it has always seemed to me *her* religion must be the true one. Yet, though I have never experienced what is called a change of heart, I can not help trusting that all will be well with any honest soul that, on the whole, has done its duty by its fellow-creatures, and has not shirked or dodged its responsibilities. I can not help thinking that there is a better world, and a happier life for us all: but no one has come back to tell us. *Well, we can at least hope for the best, and face the inevitable.*"

Let us cease not to cry unto the Lord for those who are insensible to their great peril. And also in *their* ears let us cry: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God."

When Dr. Guthrie began his ministry in the "dark places" of Edinburgh, the scenes of misery that he witnessed

stirred his heart to its very depths. No wonder: for "love to man is the inevitable result of love to Christ." After the morning visits in his parish he would almost sicken at the sights of the comforts on his own dinner-table. In his address before a vast meeting on Church Extension, he thus relieves his over-burdened heart:

"I can never forget, nothing can ever efface the impression made on my mind, when first I lifted the veil from the hideous scene of starvation and sin that lay before me. The scenes that I was called on to witness the first three or four days of my parochial visitations almost drove sleep from my pillow. They haunted me like very spectres, and, after visiting till my heart was sick, I have come up the College Wynd with the idea that I might as well have gone to be a mis-

sionary among the Hindoos on the banks of the Ganges.

“It appears from the report of the Government Commission, that in this city there are between forty and fifty thousand who habitually absent themselves from the house of God. It is astonishing how we can sit and listen so calmly to such a fact as that? Were a man to rush into this assembly and cry that on the other side of the street a house was on fire, and that some forty or fifty human beings were thronging its upper windows, and stretching out their hands for help, that news would go like an electric shock through this assembly. We would rise in a mass, and, trying who should be foremost, rush to the rescue. The feeble would give their prayers and their tears, and, were it needed, their money too; and where is the man that would

not plant his ladder against the smoking wall and peril his own life in the attempt to save others? There is this difference between that case and this, that here we have not forty or fifty, but, multiplying a thousand-fold, we have forty or fifty thousand; ay, and there is another difference, suppose we left them to perish, this fire will burn out, the shriek, like that of the widow of Hindoostan, will rise on the air for a moment, and then all is over. But if the Bible be true, there are nearly fifty thousand men and women in this city passing on to a punishment that shall never be over?"

Seldom do I pass out of church after the sacrament, without thinking of the latent power among the members. If each should keep the vows made, how soon our influence would be felt in the world.

Looking down from his pulpit on the crowded pews, Dr. Guthrie said: "A thought that presses on me when I cast my eyes over some such great assembly, and see all these human faces, is this—what power is here! what an immense moral power! We talk of the power latent in steam—latent till Watt evoked its spirit from the waters, and set the giant to turn the iron arms of machinery. It is impossible to over-estimate or rather to estimate, the power that lies latent in our churches. And why latent? Because men and women neither appreciate their individual influence, nor estimate aright their individual responsibilities."

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

Hear this word of the Lord: "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die: if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his

way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

"Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel;" "say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?"

"Blow the trumpet, and warn the people."

There is another necessity for Christian labor, which is not always considered. Not only are our services useful to others; they are also necessary for the proper development of our Christian characters. Inactivity often injures tools more than constant use. The loss in a factory from the wear and tear of the ceaseless machinery

is nothing compared with the rust of disuse.

“If the planets should at any time stand still in their course, they would be drawn into the central fire and consumed. It is necessary to their well-being that they should be flung with all their force on a path of activity. Disciples of Christ, both in ancient and modern times, lie under a similar necessity. Unless they are thrown out in a course of vigorous action, they will be drawn into an orbit so narrow that action will be no longer possible.” *

And I think many disciples will bear witness to the truth of what I say when I affirm that work is the great panacea for many spiritual maladies. It seems to possess remarkable healing

* Dr. Guthrie.

properties. Let sorrowful, feeble, sickly Christians, whose constant cry is: "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?" try work for the Master. It will restore tone to your system; yes, "Thine health shall spring forth speedily:" or as it may be rendered; "And thy wounds shall speedily be healed over."

"Of that wherewith thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give."

"The Lord thy God shall bless *thee* in all thy works."

After hearing all that can be said in the way of arguments for working, nothing touches us like the Master's simple "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"One of the least!" for "The most

damaged specimens of humanity will serve the Lord's purpose when they have been renewed in his likeness. Manufacturers of paper do not reject the raw material because it is torn and filthy."*

Can it be that Jesus' love for "one of the least" is so great that he accepts what we do for "the least" as if we did it for Him? See how beautifully Christ identifies himself with his children, and provides an easy service for his followers. "A few days ago," said a generous-hearted gentleman, "I carried to a poor Christian woman a comforter, warm but well-worn, and two loaves of bread—good bread, but a little stale. The weather was very cold, and the comforter was gratefully received. The poor woman was hungry,

* Dr. Arnot.

and the bread was better than she usually obtained. But while listening to the sermon to-day ('Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me'), I thought that, had I reflected that it was Jesus I was visiting, in the person of one of his disciples, I would have taken a new comforter and fresh bread."

"Oh! if Christ were on earth," writes Bishop Simpson, "it seems to me I would go and worship at his feet. Some of you would go and wash them with your tears, and dry them with the hairs of your head. You would go to the very ends of the earth to do something for Jesus. You need not go so far. All around you are the friends of Jesus."

"For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good."



V.

EXCUSES AND HINDRANCES.

CAN we offer any excuse for not serving?

Not infrequently we hear the remark: "We are getting too old; you younger ones must take our places."

Those of us who have not yet reached the time of old age must be very cautious in judging this class, for we can not understand the weakness and weariness that may belong to the aged. We are sorry to lose their experience, yet if we are sure of their prayers we feel they greatly help us in our more active work. When we reach old Sim-

eon's age it will be excusable if we sing "Nunc Dimittis"; but we think we would rather imitate aged Anna, who after a sight of her long-expected Lord, "spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Israel." We would like to have the enthusiasm of old Dr. Duff. After pleading for an hour and a half in behalf of India, he fainted, and was carried into the vestibule. When he revived he said: "I didn't get quite through: let me go back and finish." They said; "If you go back it will cost you your life." "Well," he said, "I shall die if I don't." So they carried him back. As they passed up the aisle the people rose, and tears flowed down every cheek at sight of the old veteran. He said to them: "Fathers and mothers of Scotland, is it true that you have got no more sons to give to India? I

have spent twenty-five years of my life there, and I have come back to die; there is plenty of money in the bank, but your sons are not willing to go. If a call comes from the queen to go there in the army, they are ready. Is it come to this, that the Lord calls for recruits for his kingdom and they will not go?" And turning to the moderator he said; "If there is no one to go to India I will return to them, and will let them know that there is one old Scotchman that can die for them if he can't live for them."

"Hear this, ye old men;" "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

The plea of personal unfitness is too poor an excuse to be mentioned. Think you that the Lord who redeemed you to work, can not make you fit, *if you are willing?*

We will imagine you have just

completed an academic or collegiate course. Frequently the question is asked: "What profession do you intend following?" and it may be your reply is: "The law." "The law! why, what do you know about the theory or practice of the law?" And you reply; "Nothing." "What will you do then?" "Why I expect to enter the law school where I can learn the theory; and at the same time I will be in a law office, where I can learn the practice."

No one thinks of advising you to avoid the profession because you are ignorant of its duties. Step by step you advance. You watch the office work closely, and in the daily assistance you are called upon to render you put in practice what you are learning. The application is easy. Fifteen years ago, in a little, old shanty that had

been abandoned by a Chicago saloon-keeper, Dwight L. Moody was attempting to conduct a religious meeting. "He was trying," writes one of the audience, "to read the story of the Prodigal Son. But a great many of the words he could not make out and had to skip. I thought, if the Lord can ever use such an instrument as that for his honor and glory, it will astonish me."

What have we heard and seen during the past two years? Throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland students, professors, learned skeptics, ignorant Romanists, operatives, artisans, inventors, children, lords, ladies, and all classes of people have been borne irresistibly by the words of the great evangelist. And now in our own land large audiences are assembling daily to listen to his plain, earnest words.

“Ah, Lord God! behold, I can not speak.” “But the Lord said unto me;” “thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.” “Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth.”

“All things are yours.” “Ask, and ye shall receive.”

There is one thing we can all do, and that is avoid hindering the work of others.

There are petrifying wells where a bunch of luscious grapes speedily turns into a bunch of unsatisfying stones. And there are petrifying communities where Christian activity meets cold rebuff, almost if not quite destructive to its life. And there are petrifying individuals, whose quiet contempt or ex-

pressed suspicion of your methods or motives weaken your strength in the way.

There are idlers in the market-place, heeding not the Lord's call, and unconsciously hindering those who would hasten to the help of the Lord. We all know some such, who rob us of our best working hours, and give us no adequate return. They "take no note of time," and laugh at us for treasuring the precious moments.

There are envious souls who hinder the work of others; for "who is able to stand before envy?" It "is the rottenness of the bones." Its green eye can not bear to look upon the successful work of others, even though it is work done for the Lord.

Lord, let these "be ashamed for their envy at the people;" "for Thou also hath wrought all our works in us."

For "the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them;" but it was "the glory of the Lord that filled the house."

"Hinder me not, O my friends."

The timid hinder God's work and ours more than they realize. Unless we are very Pauls and Peters we can hardly fail to feel their influence. It weakens our hands; it wearies our head and heart. With them fear seems always to "be in the way." And when one says to them; "The Lord delivered me from all my fears," they call it foolhardiness. They seem to possess every fear save "the fear of the Lord."

Let us see to it that we belong to none of these classes. "I will work, and who shall let it?" saith the Lord. Withdraw quickly then your opposing arm; "lest haply ye be found even to

fight against God." Lend quickly a helping hand, lest the curse of Meroz be yours: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

And here in passing we are constrained to say a word to parents. Do not withhold your children, for the Lord hath need of them. If you have given them in baptism to Him who withholds no good thing from you, then I say boldly in the name of the Lord: "Withhold not good from" Him "to whom it is due." "Ah! but we want our children. We are growing old, and we want them to be at our side to minister to us in our helplessness, and to close our eyes in death. God gave them, and we mean to keep them."

"There is that scattereth, and yet

increaseth: and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.”

Hannah gave her one little precious son to the Lord; and received in return “a worthy portion.” “The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up.”

Years ago, in the persecuting times, a pious woman was put on trial for loving Jesus, and worshipping Him according to the dictates of her own conscience. At first the magistrate counselled her to recant, but she would not deny Jesus. He then threatened that he would take away her husband; and she calmly said: “May it please your honor, Jesus is my husband.” “I will take away your child,” said the judge; and she answered: “My Jesus is better to me than ten sons.” “I will strip thee of all thy outward comforts,”

sharply said the judge once more. "Yea, but Jesus is mine," she quickly replied; "and you can not strip me of Him."

Fathers and mothers, you who can say: "Jesus is mine;" can you not give Him your children, showing by this act that Jesus is better to you than ten sons. When He calls will you keep them back? Dare you refuse to let them go?

Will you not rather, from their earliest youth, train them with special reference to the Lord's service? Let it be understood by your young children that the greatest desire of your heart is to have them become faithful servants of Christ. This does not necessarily imply that your sons must all be ministers and your daughters all missionaries; yet, it seems to me, this ought to be esteemed a great honor

by Christian parents. Let this be the aim in their training, and then if their choice differs from yours, "thou hast delivered *thy* soul."

"Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest." And Abraham "bound Isaac his son," "and took the knife."

"And God Almighty bless thee," "and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee."

An eminent clergyman sat in his study writing his sermon. His little boy toddled into the room with an expression of suffering, and holding up his pinched finger said: "Look, pa, how I hurt it!" The father, interrupted in the middle of a sentence, glanced hastily at him, and with just the slightest tone of impatience, said; "I can not help it, sonny." The little

fellow's eyes grew bigger, and as he turned to go out he said, in a low voice; "Yes, you could: you might have said, 'Oh!'"

Was not this a sermon in a nutshell!

While Captain Webb was accomplishing his great feat of swimming from Dover to Calais, the papers inform us that, in strict accordance with previous agreement, no one assisted him in the least: that is, he touched no support for twenty-one hours and three quarters. But a row-boat preceded him, to direct his course, and friends in the boat watched him anxiously, and supplied him with refreshments when needed. As he neared the shore anxiety for the exhausted swimmer became more intense, for wind and tide grew stronger as the poor man's strength ebbed. While angry

seas were breaking over him, a large row-boat, containing eight friends, was launched, and as they rapidly came towards him cheer after cheer fell upon the ear of the weary man. And better still, these friends rowed on the weather side and saved the seas from breaking over him. And so at last Webb touched the shore, and the men in the boats leaped out to hug him with delight, while a crowd of excited spectators joined in the hearty welcome.

At a fire in a large city, while the upper stories of a lofty dwelling were wrapped in smoke, and the lower stories were all aglow with flame, a piercing shriek told the startled firemen that there was some one still in the building in peril. A ladder was quickly reared, until it touched the heated walls; and diving through the flames and

smoke a brave young fireman rushed up the rounds on his errand of mercy.

Stifled by the smoke he stopped, and was about to descend. The crowd was in agony, as a life seemed lost, for every moment of hesitation seemed an age. While this shivering fear seized every beholder, a voice from the crowd called out; "Cheer him! cheer him!" and a wild "hurrah" burst from the anxious spectators. As the cheer reached the fireman he started upward through the curling smoke, and in a few minutes was seen coming down with a child in his arms. The cheer did the work.

"Those who watch us at the start," said an old life-boatman, "always give us a cheer and a 'God-speed' at starting, and a 'Well-done all' when the work is over."

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."



VI.

HOW SHALL WE SERVE.

IT is not enough that we refrain from hindering; or even that we give our warm sympathy and hearty cheer. We must render immediate, personal, cheerful, earnest and constant service.

Our service must be immediate, in obedience to the command; "Go work *to-day* in my vineyard." And here, as everywhere, the Master must be our model: and his own words are; "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

“Four things come not back; the spoken word; the sped arrow; the past life; the neglected opportunity.”

“I shall never forgive myself in this world,” said Dr. Guthrie, in a large assembly, “that once I did not save a child from ruin.”

The lost opportunity to which he alludes, is related in his autobiography. One night, in his visit to the police court, as he looked down from a gallery upon an open space below, he saw a poor child, about eight years old, lying on the pavement, with a brick for a pillow. He laid right before the stove, and its ruddy light falling full upon him revealed the sweetest, calmest face that could be seen. “His story was sad, but not singular. He knew neither father nor mother, brothers nor friends, in the wide world; his only friends were the police, his only

home their office. How he lived they did not know; but there he was at night; the stone by the stove was a better bed than the steps of a cold stair. I could not get that boy out of my head or heart for days and nights together. I have often regretted that some effort was not made to save him. Before now, launched on the sea of human passions and exposed to a thousand temptations, he has, too probably, become a melancholy wreck; left by a society, more criminal than he, to become a criminal, and then punished for his fate, not his fault."

"And when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it."

"That thou doest, do quickly."

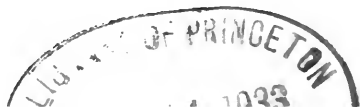
As soon as President Charles Finney experienced the forgiving grace of our Lord Jesus, he dropped his work

in his chosen profession almost as suddenly as the sons of Zebedee left their nets, and, entering upon the work of an evangelist, was henceforth intensely consecrated to the work of saving men.

“And straightway they forsook their nets.”

As soon as the apostles received power they exercised it. Impetuous Peter does not wait to have a pulpit built for him, but, thinking of the perishing around him, “rushes in, and strikes home, to win souls.” “In those days Peter stood up.” And we can never think of him as sitting with folded hands.

“And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go *quickly* unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for



there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun."

And Aaron ran.

"Go out *quickly* into the streets and lanes of the city," said the Master, "and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

"Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in."

"And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are *ready* to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint."

"Slack not thy hand from thy servants;" cry the men of Gibeon, "come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us." "Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night."

"Would you call *young* converts to immediate service?" asks one: "for the work requires experience, wisdom

and tact." We answer there are camps of instruction in the church of Christ where raw recruits may be drilled. Let them enter the Sabbath school and take a class: for in the teacher's place more can be learned than in the scholar's. Let them take small tract districts, and go out in the streets and lanes. Let them establish small prayer-meetings, where they can exercise newly attained powers. If they can get the right kind of a person from the veteran corps to help and advise them, it will be an advantage. But simple reliance upon the Master is better by far. "He giveth power to the faint;" wisdom to those who lack: and courage to all who wait upon Him.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

"With the well-advised is wisdom."

A young Norwegian, converted at one of Mr. Moody's meetings in England, has started the first Sunday school ever opened in Northern Norway.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest.”

“Every child of God,” says Mr. Moody, “ought to be always ready to work and lead others to Christ. Each one has at least one talent; and if that was improved God would give more.”

Mr. Moody's own experience has verified the truth of his words; and we all easily perceive that he has to-day much more than one talent, in trust.

“He went about doing good.”

In personal service also our Master is our model. His look, his touch,

his tears, his voice, wrought an effectual work among the sorrow-stricken who met him in the way. "Master, I beseech thee look upon my son:" cries a broken-hearted father. Before the glance of Jesus the unclean spirit shrinks back dismayed, and the child is restored. "And they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking. After that, he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly." His tears at the grave of Lazarus touched many hearts, and led the Jews to exclaim: "Behold how he

loved him!" And that shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept," has been a whole sermon of comfort to the sorrowing of all ages and climes. "Lazarus, come forth!" cries the mighty voice, and the obedient grave gives up the dead. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth."

"The voice of the Lord is powerful." "It is the voice of my beloved."

In one of our neighboring cities a lady passing a dram-shop, noticed a man staggering out, and heard him utter these words in a hopeless tone; "Lost, utterly lost!" Coming nearer

she laid her hand upon his arm, and said; "My friend, you are not lost, for Jesus came to save the lost." Then and there out of a loving heart, she preached unto him Jesus. Amazed and deeply touched the man followed the lady as she walked home, observing carefully the house she entered. And in the good providence of God there soon came a day when he entered that house bringing to his friend the glad tidings of his conversion and reformation. That human touch was as if Jesus met him in the way.

"*Thou* therefore gird up thy loins, and arise and speak unto them." "And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully." For "silence is sin," says Dr. Arnot, "if your cry might prevent a neighbor from stumbling over a precipice."

On the ceiling of the Rospigliosi

Palace there is a beautiful painting of the Aurora. But the effect intended to be produced by Guido Reni was never realized, because the fresco was too far from the spectators, who soon became weary and dizzy by looking up at it. To obviate this difficulty a mirror was placed on the floor beneath, and the painting reflected now became pleasant to the eye; and the longer it was examined in the glass, the more it was appreciated and admired.

Let us imagine a case.

Weary with gazing upward, you turn your eye to the mirrored representation, and perceive a stranger at your side, and hear a low-drawn sigh. "What troubles you?" you venture to inquire. "O, sir," says the stranger, "I hear the exclamations of delight all around me, but I can see nothing." "Perhaps you are near-sighted;" you

remark: "then look into this mirror, and you will lose nothing, for it is all faithfully reflected there."

Another sigh escapes the stranger, and in tones that touch your heart he replies; "Alas, I am blind!"

Wondering what led him in among the beauties he can not see, you draw his arm within your own, and lead him out, and sitting down in God's sweet sunshine, you speak to him in tones of kindly sympathy, until his heart is drawn out toward you. Turning his sightless eyes to yours he exclaims; "Surely you must be one who loves Jesus the Crucified, for I have heard they love every body else as well."

It is easy now for you to speak that dear name; easy now to tell the stranger of Blind Bartimeus and the Great Healer who met him by the way. The beauty of Guido Reni's Aurora was

lost upon the blind man, and the mirrored representation did him no good. But with eyes of his heart he saw Jesus reflected in the sympathizing stranger at his side.

And so it often comes to pass that those who are blind to the glory of "The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity," and blind to the beauty of Jesus, who is "the express image of his person," see the divine image reflected in some humble disciple.

"Love one another; as I have loved you." "And let this love bring forth much fruit;" "So shall ye be my disciples."

A traveller in Egypt speaking of the temples says they are surrounded by small chapels, some of them cut from a single stone. One unused stone was pointed out that had been carried nine hundred miles. It weighed twelve

hundred tons. "Why leave unused so goodly a stone?" asks the traveller. And the answer is; "Because the workmen sighed at the journey's end." They will not insult the gods by offering what is given with regret.

This objection can never be made concerning the stone that is laid "in Zion for a foundation." Our "tried stone," our "precious corner-stone," our "sure foundation," "was cut out of the mountain without hands," as the prophet foretold; and though to human appearance his life was in the hands of his enemies, nevertheless his own words were true: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." "Knowest thou not," says Pilate, "that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus an-

swered, thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." And with this willing sacrifice God, who "loveth a cheerful giver," was well-pleased, for "it pleased the Lord to bruise him."

The outline of the most wonderful picture the world has ever seen was dimly visible long years ago on Mount Moriah. Look for a moment at this cartoon, while yet art was in swaddling-clothes.

The father rises "early in the morning," and hastens to obey the divine command. Isaac, the "only son" and well-beloved, dutifully follows. Without murmuring or gainsaying, the obedient father lays the submissive son upon the altar of sacrifice. "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son," when lo! a substitute is found, even "a

ram caught in a thicket by his horns," and held there by power divine.

Generations looked admiringly upon this beautiful cartoon; but it dimly foreshadowed Calvary's picture. See now the back of the cartoon is covered with darkness and blood, and a sharp instrument cuts into every line of the wonderful design. "They pierced my hands and my feet." And "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side."

Yet he could say: "I delight to do thy will, O my God."

Look now upon him "whom they have pierced," and mourn not, but rather rejoice. Frescoed upon heaven's eternal wall, beyond the ravages of time, see the glorious picture of "the King in his beauty," "the Lamb that was slain."

And as you look, redeemed of the

Lord, let it not satisfy you to sing a new song of praise and thanksgiving: but let the sight of this cheerful, willing sacrifice lead you to cheerful service.

“This have I done for *thee*.
What hast thou done for *me*?”

A weaver sat before his loom, busily weaving the beautiful colors into a carpet for royal feet. As he wove, the golden sunbeams fell upon his work and lit it up so beautifully, that he stopped his hand to gaze upon it. The thought entered his heart to weave the sunbeams in with his woof. “Oh,” he said, “if I could but fasten the golden, flashing rays when they rest on my work my fortune would be made.”

And the idea became the one thought of his life, until from an enthusiast he became almost insane. When, by after years of faithful working, he suc-

ceeded in producing a carpet upon which the warm sunlight lay, he was indeed famous. Kings came from afar to see the wonderful fruits of his skill, and his work became immortal.

A sinner saved by grace knelt at the mercy-seat, giving thanks for divine favor. As he prayed golden rays from the Sun of Righteousness shone into the deepest recesses of his once darkened heart. "Oh," he said, "if I could but fasten these rays within my heart, how happy I would be."

He prayed awhile, and then a better thought came into his mind. "Oh, if only I could shed these rays into other darkened souls, how happy I would be through time and through eternity!"

He rose with shining face, and went his way carrying sunshine. The subtle beams from his happy heart entered many other hearts, and transformed

many lives into anthems of praise to Jesus.

“Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”

In earnestness also the Master is our model. His forerunner was a man of wonderful earnestness, who mused in the wilderness until “the fire burned,” and then spake burning words. “Respectable, conventional teachers, who spake smooth things and prophesied deceits” hardly relished his cutting rebukes. The “vibrating tone of a voice that rang with scorn and indignation” was not pleasant music to the self-satisfied ears of Scribes and Pharisees. “O generation of vipers!” was not a polite style of address. And “the chaff” in “Jerusalem and all Judea” trembled visibly as, in thunder tones, he spoke of “unquenchable fire.”

And when the Lord came he too

used earnest words. "Woe unto thee Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

And in the earnestness of love he cries: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon

you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

And in the earnestness of his life, from the wilderness where "the Spirit driveth him," to the cross where he cried ; "It is finished !" we see an intensity and directness of purpose which it is well for us to study. For "from the days of John the Baptist, until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The Christian life is an earnest one from beginning to end. At the first step we hear : "Strive—agonize—to enter into the strait gate." And having passed in through the wicket gate, we have these earnest directions from the zealous apostle Paul : "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his

might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and

supplication, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

And not only "for all saints," but for all sinners must we "watch and pray." Not only must we fight our own unseen foes, but we must also help others to fight. We must go with earnest, loving words to those who are straying from the truth, and seek to bring them back. Yes, earnestness will pervade our whole lives, if "we have the mind of Christ."

"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord."

When the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church was first considering the feasibility of establishing a mission in China, the Rev. J. D. Collins of Michigan offered himself for the work. For lack of funds he was rejected.

Upon hearing the decision of the Board Mr. Collins wrote to Bishop Janes to engage him passage "before the mast"; saying his own strong arm should pull him to China, and support him after arriving there.

This resolve led the Board to establish the China Mission.

"One needs sometimes no common measure of grace," wrote Dr. Guthrie, "not to be weary in well doing. Yet it is not the '*successful*' but the 'good and faithful servant' whom our Lord commends. Christ's service was constant; so must be ours. 'Neither is this a work of one day or two.'"

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" "And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives." He could not rest

while the blind waited to receive their sight, and the lame halted on their crutches: while the ears of the deaf were stopped, and dead sinners lay bound hand and foot.

“We can not,” says Farrar, in his valuable book, “imitate Him in the occupations of His ministry, nor can we even remotely reproduce in our own experience the external circumstances of His life during those three crowning years.”

Nevertheless the Master says: “Follow me.” The blind, the lame, the deaf, the dead, are near us, waiting our touch. “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth” let us constantly seek their good. Our ministering must not be spasmodic: the Christian’s whole life must be “service for God” and others: “Here a little and there a little.”

“No act falls fruitless; none can tell
How vast its power may be.”

And if, for a moment, we relax our vigilance, who can tell what the result may be? “No observation for three days” on the Schiller; you well remember the result. Had one cast of the lead been taken before the course was altered it would have revealed danger, for there was an error in their reckoning. But on, on, into the jaws of death two hundred and fifty-four passengers were plunged. In vain then the life-boats, the life-belts, the life-buoys. Death reigned!

Thousands are rushing down to death; and shall we relax our diligence? No: let our service be immediate, personal, cheerful, earnest, constant: “always abounding in the work of the Lord.”



VII.

NECESSARY TRAINING.

WHEN the king of Babylon had chosen the noble youth of Israel he “appointed them a daily provision of the king’s meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.”

The preparatory course prescribed by the king seemed of little worth to these servants of the living God; and they sought and obtained plainer diet, and a better preparation from the Lord. Rejecting the king’s wine, they were

better fitted to drink of the fountains of knowledge: and their diet of pulse left them "fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat." And, best of all, when they came before the king for examination, they were found to be "ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

Before inquiring what preparation you require for Christ's service, let us ask; Do you really desire it? Solemnly we ask the question: Do you want to stand among the workers; or are you satisfied with the hope of your own salvation, and willing to leave to others the grand work of rescuing a world of perishing sinners? ✠

Presuming that your honest desire is to serve, we will give a few plain hints about the training.

Neglect of the study of the Bible is one great cause of the unfitness of Christians for the Lord's work. It is out of the Scripture that the man of God is "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This has been strikingly illustrated in the case of Mr. Moody. "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" It has been said of him "he talks Bible, and prays Bible." One marked result of his labors in Chicago before he went abroad, was a greatly increased use of the Bible among Christians.

Nothing can excuse neglect of Bible reading. "Want of time," so often pleaded, is no excuse: for one verse at a time carefully and prayerfully pondered, will soon "thoroughly furnish" you. If at any time you are too busy to sit down to a meal, you take a portion of food in your hand and hasten on your way. So if you are too busy

to sit down and read a chapter, read a verse, and go to your work carrying your Testament in your pocket. Whenever a leisure moment comes take out your Testament and read another verse.

But what is the business that so fully occupies you? Is it more important than God's work? "I have a family to support," answers one: "and if any man provide not for his own—" Yes, yes, we have heard that text before. And in order that you may provide for your own, especially for those of your own household, we counsel you to study the Scriptures, so that, like a good householder, you may bring forth out of this treasury things new and old; "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

At the close of that little meeting,

before referred to, held fifteen years ago, Mr. Moody said to a friend: "I have got only one talent, I have no education: but I love the Lord Jesus, and I want to do something for him. *I want you to pray for me.*"

And it has been said wherever he goes he summons people to pray. A grand impulse to prayer pervades Great Britain. "Ministers pray as they never prayed before. Laymen pray who never prayed before." An intelligent observer of this wonderful movement writes: "First, Christians have learned to love one another and to work together for one common object: and, second, *we have learned to pray more.*"

Writing to an invalid friend who had sent him the life of Edward Forbes, the naturalist, Dr. Guthrie says: "Great and famous as Forbes was, my dear

friend, you can do more good by your prayers, shut up to your house, and often to your chamber, than he did, or could do, by all his pursuits and discoveries: and that is comforting and cheering to you. 'Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world.'"

"I once knew a little cripple," said Mr. Moody, "who lay upon her death-bed. She had given herself to God, and was distressed only because she could not work actively for him among the lost. Her clergyman visited her, and hearing her complaint, advised her to write down the names of those she wished to see turned to God, and offer prayer for them. Soon a great religious interest sprang up in that village, and the child eagerly asked the names of the saved. A few weeks later she died, and under her pillow was found a paper bearing the names of fifty-six

persons, every one of whom had in the revival been converted. By each name was a little cross, by which the poor crippled saint had checked off the names of the converts as they were reported to her."

At Blackgang on the Isle of Wight the traveller sees a chapel for worship, with this inscription: "Asked of God July, 1873. Received Decem., 1873." And this is its history. A family returning from India sought a home prayerfully. "Go to Blackgang," advised an evangelist, "and the Lord will give you souls not a few. Ask hundreds, and he will give them."

The population was scanty and scattered, and the field seemed too small to warrant so great a harvest: nevertheless they went. When they sought land upon which to erect a chapel the principal man to whom they applied

said: You can not buy a foot of land for the purpose within a mile of this place. They said not another word, but straightway spread the matter before the Lord: and the result was the property-holder came, offering the ground, and promising to build for them, allowing them ten years in which to make their payments."

And it came to pass that this godly family by their prayers and their labors, "did turn many away from iniquity."

"Call upon me." "I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me."

"I watched once with interest," writes Dr. Arnot, "the operations of a brick-maker in a field of clay. There was great agility in his movements. He wrought by piece, and the more he turned out the higher was his pay. His body moved like a machine. His

task for the time was simply to raise a quantity of clay from a lower to a higher level, by means of a spade. He threw up one spadeful, and then he dipped his tool in a pail of water that stood by. After every spadeful of clay there was a dip in the water. The operation of dipping the spade occupied almost, if not altogether, as much time as the raising of the clay. My first thought was, if he should dispense with these apparently useless baptisms, he might perform almost double the amount of work. My second thought was wiser; on reflection I saw that if he had attempted to continue the work without the alternate washings, the clay would have stuck to the tool, and his progress would have been altogether arrested. Right well did the skilful workman know that to plunge his instrument in water every time it

was used, furthered and did not hinder his work. Indeed, it was this that made his work possible."

The secret of our power is close union with Christ. "Give me a great thought," said the dying Herder to his son, "that I may quicken myself with it." "Give me a great thought," cries the Christian worker, "that I may be strengthened for more earnest work." And we can think of none greater than this; "One in us."

"Union is strength," "beloved in the Lord."

In Luke's simple tribute to Barnabas, we find the secret of his power; "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith." No wonder he was chosen by the church at Jerusalem to share personally in the joy that had come to many in Antioch. We see a natural connection between

his character and the results recorded by Luke in the same verse: "and much people was added unto the Lord:" for the influence of good men is felt wherever they go. Though before his coming "a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord," yet by his coming no doubt many others were influenced, while he "exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."

"Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." "All power is given unto me," says Jesus. Yes, "God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this: that power belongeth unto God." Or as the verse might more correctly be rendered; "Once hath God spoken: these two things have I heard." What are these two things? First, that strength is the Lord's. Second, that he is the ori-

gin of power. "The Lord will give strength unto his people."

If you have been "baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," cry unto him in the words, but not the spirit, of Simon; "Give me also this power."

"Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high," was Jesus' parting command. And the record tells us: "Then returned they unto Jerusalem, from the mount called Olivet,"
 "and when they were come in, they went up into an upper room," . . .
 "and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." "They continued in," literally, *were strong in or towards*. On the mount "they worshipped:" in the upper room they waited: and then in the world they worked. Long ago they returned to worship on the holy mount of God. They rest

from their labors, but their work goes on: for the church to-day is the greatest power in the world, and that upper room contained the germ.

At the Master's feet the disciples received their preparatory training, and at length were baptized with the Holy Ghost.

"Tarry ye." In the upper room of secret devotion beg on bended knee for the power you need. "The vessels must first be filled; and then they bear about and spread the blessed Name that fills them." "Quicken *me* in thy way:" "*then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

"Put them in mind to be *ready* to every good work."



VIII.

NATURE OF OUR WORK.

TRULY the work to which God calls us is a great work, though the quietness in which it is done often causes its greatness to be overlooked. You go softly to your closet, and, having shut the door, pray to your "Father which is in secret," and in answer to that prayer a soul is brought in penitence to Jesus' feet. You kneel in weakness to supplicate power; and then you pass out into the world to slip a little note or tract into the hand of one you meet, or to whisper to some one of the Saviour's love. If

you are rich you quietly send money even to the ends of the earth, not forgetting those at home; and the gift speeds the time when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." If you are a mother you train your little ones "without observation." The Sabbath-school teacher in the class, like the mother at home, may work "not with observation," but "the days will come" when this work shall be revealed as well as rewarded.

Not long ago, while within a stone's throw of the Capitol building in Albany, we were told three hundred and ninety men were at work on the farther side of the building. But though within sight we were not within sound, for the wind carried all sound in the opposite direction.

The sound of the Lord's workmen is wafted directly to heaven, and not one stroke of the spiritual tools is lost upon the ear of Him who appoints "to every man his work."

Realizing in some degree the importance of the work, let us give ourselves more unreservedly to it, and say to those who would call us to join them in less important pursuits; "I am doing a great work, so that I can not come down; why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

It is a good work.

"Ours is a good work," said an old life-boat man, "a work worth dying in. We save from five hundred to a thousand lives every year. That would be a work to be proud of, if it meant nothing more than bare lives saved; though, of course, it does mean

more; it means thousands of wives saved from being made widows, and tens of thousands of poor children from being fatherless. There's hardly a man breathing that wouldn't help the life-boat cause in whatever way he could, if he had once heard the cries that we often hear when going to a wreck; or the 'God bless you' of those whose lives we have saved."

"The Redeemer has instituted the entire church as a simple, soul-saving organization:" writes one of his faithful ministers.* "It is as if every body lived at a life-boat station, and slept with mind alert and ear open for a human cry amid the roar of the eternal sea."

"There is sorrow on the sea."

It is a paying work.

* Rev. Charles S. Robinson, D.D.

“What business are you in now?” asked one man of another, as they met after years of separation. “I am working for Christ,” was the reply. “An honest, but not a paying work,” remarked the other. “You will need to work for the world as well as religion. You always said you meant to be a rich man, and an influential man; but you have started wrong for that. Large drafts upon your time, your purse, and the sacrifice of many plans, are demanded by this religion of yours.”

No doubt these views are shared by many who would hesitate to express them so plainly. But listen to the better language of another: “The true life is not to eat and drink, to seek with painful effort to add another thousand to your pile of dollars, to chase breathlessly the thistle-tops of

earthly pleasures blown before us by the breeze. What intelligent husbandman will plant a tree with its top in the ground and its roots in the air, and expect it to flourish and bear fruit? And yet he who makes money-getting and worldly pleasure-seeking the chief aims of this immortal being, expecting to gather substantial happiness therefrom, does a ten-thousand-fold more foolish and unreasonable thing.”*

Hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto them. The lips that uttered them speak no longer the language of earth, for William Arnot, servant of Christ, has passed to his rest and reward. Could he once more speak to dying men, think you he would speak less earnestly?

Wherefore do you labor “for that

* Dr. Arnot.

which satisfieth not?" Come enter the service of Christ, and live the true life.

When you have received power from on high lay your hand upon the one nearest you. Remember the old commission, "Beginning at Jerusalem." "If it do not begin at home," writes Dr. Arnot, "it will not convert the world. If it essay to reach the heathen by leaping over the many ranks of unslain enemies to Christ in our own hearts, and many ranks of unrepented blasphemers of his name on our own streets, it will never reach its distant mark among the heathen, or it will reach the mark with a force already spent, lacking power to penetrate the armor in which idolatry is encased."

"We must hasten to go out to the uttermost parts of the earth with our

message; but we must let the men who are beside us feel the glow of our zeal as it passes by."

And thus the Lord's words shall be fulfilled: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

The high-sounding question: "How shall we reach the masses?" has been well answered: "Don't try. Save the one nearest to you."

Permit a familiar illustration.

The fire is burning brightly, shedding its cheerful glow into every corner of the room. Suddenly there is a movement among the upper coals, and a dead, black mass falls upon the living one. The brightness is suddenly dimmed. We fear the fire will be extinguished. But wait awhile. Soon the genial glow and welcome warmth

returns; for every live coal has touched its fellow; and now the whole mass burns brightly. Which having seen, we said, "Here is a lesson for Christ's living ones."

Into the harbor of New York come daily vessels crowded with living freight. The great majority of those who come to our shores from all lands under the sun are spiritually dead. If all these could be brought into close contact with living, glowing Christians what would be the effect?

The Christians "scattered abroad" by the persecution that arose "against the church which was at Jerusalem," "went everywhere preaching the word." Prudence would have counselled silence, lest the mighty hand of the unrighteous persecutor fall again upon them. But they could not help speaking the things which they had seen and heard.

“These holy fugitives were like so many lamps lighted by the fire of the Holy Spirit, spreading everywhere the sacred flame by which they themselves had been illuminated.”

Worshipping in a little church one beautiful Sabbath during the past summer, we were reminded of that Thessalonica scene enacted so long ago. The place was one of those far-off, quiet retreats where Christians and others go for rest and refreshment during the summer's heat. The pastor's text was the old troubled cry: “These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”

Strangers from the hotels, arrayed in rich garments of the latest fashion, had crowded into the little church until it was well filled; and the text caused a smile to pass over the audience. But sober thoughts soon pos-

sessed me as I reviewed the old scene, and God forgive me if harsh thoughts found a place while I contrasted that scene with the present, and reflected how little good would be accomplished by the coming of so many Christians to that village.

“So many people leave their Sundays in the city I think every day is Monday here,” writes one from the sea-shore. “The bathing master says the boarders make him open his houses, and he must be there to take care of them. I heard him say: ‘Why these people know so much more than I do, and they say it is right.’”

“Why do you stay here by your boat, instead of going to church?” we inquired one Sabbath of our old boatman. “Oh! the people expect me,” he replied. “Let them be disappointed then” we said. But while we talked

to him about things unseen and eternal, his watchful eye discerned a coming passenger, and interrupting us, his eager voice joined with the other boatmen in the cry: "Want to cross the river, sir?"

The day following when we came to cross the river to meet our home-returning train, our boatman's place was supplied by another. It mattered little that the people expected him, for the strong hand of sickness held him back. Many times we have wondered whether it proved a sickness unto death; and if so, whether the poor man sought the help of One mighty to save, before he touched the cold waters of the river of death.

"Some people," says George McDonald, "accuse me of being too prone to turn my stories into sermons. They forget that I have another Master

than the public, and I must serve him first."

A correspondent of the "Sunday School Times" desires a report from the multitude of Sunday-school workers who have been spending their vacations in the country. "Reports of specific work," adds the Editor, "with practical results, would be welcomed, and doubtless would prompt some who were inactive this year to do better another season."

Two "active workers" from Dr. ——'s flourishing Sabbath school in New York, when asked one Sabbath last summer to go to Sabbath school, replied, "No, we have enough of that home."

Perhaps they *did* need rest. But is it such a heavy burden to spend an hour in Bible teaching? Is it very tiresome to meet other Christians in

the social prayer-meeting, and help them by offering prayer or joining in the singing? If you can do neither, can you not at least help by your presence?

“How much I thank you for your valuable gift,” writes one in acknowledgment of a few books and picture cards for the Sabbath school. “Such expressions of interest and sympathy are, I assure you, very grateful to us, deprived as we are, almost entirely, of any fellowship with Christian churches. You who enjoy it so fully have yet to learn the value of such pleasant remembrances.”

This is a matter deserving the serious consideration of every city Christian. Coming from flourishing churches and schools, where new methods are in operation, and where every advantage of experience and intelligence combine

to help the work, who can estimate the good that they can do by their *living* presence, even for one Sabbath, in feeble and isolated churches? Sympathy, cheering words, judicious hints, a few books for the Sunday school, how acceptable and timely!

“Why do Christians so often leave their religion behind them when they come from home?” asks one. And Dr. Arnot, simply but sorrowfully gives the following solution: “In these cases, as the result proves, the religion was an external thing. It was of the nature of a bondage.” Remove the cords of home restraint, and every man goes to his own.

Paul seemed to find his rest in change of place. He really did turn things upside down when he visited any place. It did very little good for the timid brethren to hurry him away

from Thessalonica, for in Berea he lost no time preaching the word. Then they hurried him out of Berea, and changed his place, but not his work: for there also "disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him."

The record does not tell us whether friends at Thessalonica and Berea wasted any cautionary words upon "this babbler." As far as we know he was not reminded that he came to that place for his health, and must needs keep out of the synagogue and market place. That his words were foolishness to some is evident by the term "babblers" which they applied to him, for the original is "seed-picker," and was applied to crows, and also to persons who pick up scraps of knowledge and impart them to others re-

gardless of occasion or connection. So foolish Paul seemed to them "because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."



IX.

WOMAN'S WORK.

LET me speak a few words especially to the handmaidens of the Lord.

A missionary from India regards the conversion of one woman as equal to the conversion of twenty men, as far as their influence in the propagation of Christianity goes. One sex can never be thoroughly converted without the other; and it is principally owing to the opposition of wife or mother that so many men in India do not openly profess a religion in which they secretly believe.

We are told that in India alone nearly 120,000,000 women are still held in a state of physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual slavery; and there is but one power in the world that can save them, and that is the Gospel, carried to them by tender hands, and spoken to them in the loving tones of Christian women.

“Zenana teaching,” writes one of our missionaries, “is gradually undermining the ignorance, superstition, and force of custom which holds the women of India in bondage. And where once the religious spirit in women is set free from the influences which attach it to Hinduism, it will go forth to meet Christ far more directly and boldly than it does in men, with whom it is held in check by considerations of interest or intellect. We can not pray too sincerely, or labor too industrious-

ly, or spend too freely, that this most important branch of missionary work may have a fuller and freer scope."

But while India offers a wide and inviting field for the exercise of woman's peculiar power, we need scarcely remind you that "the field is the world." "Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields" that are far away; if God so calls you. Lose no time following the honorable company of workers who have "forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands." But if God directs your eyes rather to the near home fields, hasten gladly into them, for they too "are white already to harvest." You can not find the village, or hamlet, or house even, too small for the exercise of your Christian working. Close by your side may walk one who needs your

ministrations as much as your unknown sister in India.

Many a disciple, longing to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth, has felt the lines drawing closer and closer around her, until only a little, obscure corner of the vineyard was left to her hands. And then while murmuring at this "strange act" of the Lord, suddenly another tightening of the lines brought her upon her bed, where the four walls seemed to press in upon her soul, causing her to say; "I will weep bitterly, labor not to comfort me;" "for it is a day of trouble," "and of perplexity:" "it is better for me to die than to live" if I can not work for Christ.

But look again, and "behold, a ladder set up" from that bed of pain "and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold, the angels of God ascend-

ing and descending on it." And from the sides of this sick chamber windows look out to the four corners of the earth. And the toilers in the far-off fields are sustained in their work by the prayers of one who, lying helpless, has wonderful power pleading with God.

Whose work is the greatest?

And in eternity will they not rejoice together?

If only the spirit of true consecration to Christ rested upon all Christian women the world would speedily be converted to Christ.

Listen to the account of one woman's work, narrated by Rev. Theophilus Larrioux, of France, during the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York.

Fifty strangers came one Communion Sabbath into one of the French

Protestant churches. Whence came they? And what brought them there?

Many years ago a Roman Catholic woman left her native village and became a servant in the family of a Christian pastor in Paris. She was there converted, and after a few years of service returned to her native village, where all the inhabitants were Romanists or infidels. She hastened from house to house to tell her friends and neighbors what God had done for her soul. And while her rejoicing heart poured out its gladness in a message of salvation for all, God's Spirit descended, and converts multiplied, until a congregation was gathered, and a pastor was called.

Among the believers was a rich man, who formerly had been proud to enroll himself on the census-list of Paris as "an atheist." This man built a chap-

el and divine services were held in it. After three or four Sabbaths the French government closed this place of worship, and the converts, unwilling to lose the Sacrament, walked eight miles to the nearest church. The inhabitants of this village have now resolved to abandon Romanism.

This was the work of one woman.

The latter-day promise is beginning to be fulfilled; the Lord is pouring out His spirit "upon the handmaids."

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord," let each Christian woman say. "True I am not worthy, and know not why 'thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger;' yet if thou dost say; 'Abide here fast by my maidens,' I will glean in this field 'until even.'"

Yes, and in the twilight of life, when my days of active service are over, I

will kneel among the gleaners, and try to strengthen their hearts with the old field salutation; "The Lord be with you," thus ever reminding them of their Strong Helper. Lifting my trembling hands to heaven I will tell of the faithfulness of the Lord "to the generation following."

"My soul doth magnify the Lord," "for he hath regarded the low estate of his" handmaidens, lifting women from the degradation of heathen servitude, and honoring them with service in the household of faith: graciously permitting them to minister to him while he suffered in the flesh, and now allowing them to do honorable work in his church. "I have chosen you, and ordained you."

When aged Anna saw her Lord in the temple she hastened to speak of him "to all them that looked for re-

demption in Jerusalem." And when Mary Magdalene received her commission to preach she lost no time, but obedient to her Lord's command—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God"—she rejoiced to be the first to proclaim "Jesus, and the Resurrection."

Simeon departed in peace after having seen "the Lord's Christ;" and Peter returned to his fishing; but Anna and Mary lost no time; "because the King's business required haste."

What shall we say to those who see no beauty in the Lord's service? What *can* we say? Our cry is unto the Lord. O Lord! open the blind eyes! Bring the prisoners of the world and Satan out from their degrading servitude. Let not thy glory be given to another, neither thy praise to those

who deserve it not. "Bring the blind by a way that they knew not:" "lead them in paths that they have not known:" "make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." "These things" "do unto them, and not forsake them." By their conduct now they say to worldly pleasures, "ye are our gods." But bring thy "daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by" thy name; for hast thou not created them for thy glory? Lead them every one to say: "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey." "O our God, hear the prayer of thy" handmaid. Let even these simple pages draw some into more willing, active service; that it may be mine at last to stand before Thee in the upper Temple, and say; "O my Lord, I am the woman that stood by Thee here, pray-

ing; and the Lord hath given me my petition. Here am I, and my Christian sisters and co-workers, whom thou didst make 'willing in the day of thy power.'"

And "unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," "unto him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

And now, lest we be misunderstood, we will give a hint to whom it may concern: and we borrow from the pages of "Urbane and His Friends."

Helvia, an ardent young disciple, considers herself called to work among the heathen women of India. To Claudia, an aged and devoted servant of Christ, she goes with her plans.

"Dear Helvia, do you consider that your going on a mission would involve neglect of another important one?"

“You mean father? Yes, I have thought of that. But I have his full consent.”

“No doubt. But you leave him, just as he is entering on advancing years, to the care of strangers. Strangers will minister to his last wants, and close his dying eyes.”

As Claudia goes on to picture the lonely old man in his increasing feebleness, at first Helvia says: “Dear Claudia, you are the last person to throw cold water on Christian service:” but afterwards she confesses; “you have put things before me in quite a new light.” And then she adds so longingly: “I did so want to be a blessing to many, many, many souls.”

“And why may you not? Is a foreign field the only one in which one can work?”

“I had such a fancy for this particular field,” said Helvia, regretfully.

“Ah, but we have to give up our fancies, and do what God pleases. And you can find any number of useful occupations, if you love Christ, and are always on the lookout for them.”

“I do love him! I love him so that I hoped he would trust me to go and talk about him to—oh, I don’t know how many people!”

“Well, are there no heathen in our own land?”

“Yes, there are, and I’ll go on a mission to them!” said Helvia, brightening. “I don’t know how I ever came to think of such a thing as leaving my father.”

And Helvia never went to India. In the quiet routine of domestic and social life, where to the ordinary eye she appeared to be little more than a

good daughter and a pleasant friend, she grew stronger daily in the Lord and in the power of his might; and the service of her loving heart was just as precious to the Master, as that of her more conspicuous sisters on the foreign mission field.

“Forenoon, and afternoon, and night! Forenoon,
And afternoon, and night! Forenoon, and—what!
The empty song repeats itself. No more?
Yea, that is life: make this forenoon sublime,
This afternoon a psalm, this night a prayer,
And Time is conquered, and thy crown is won.”



X.

THE SPIRIT IN WHICH WE SERVE.

THE acceptableness of our service depends upon the spirit that prompts it.

A little boy who had plenty of pennies, dropped one into the missionary box, laughing as he did so. He had no thought in his heart about Jesus, the heathen, or the missionary. His was a *tin* penny.

Another boy put a penny in, and as he did so looked around with a self-applauding gaze, as if he had done some great thing. His was a *brass*

penny. It was not the gift of a "lowly heart," but of a proud heart.

A third boy gave a penny, saying to himself; "I suppose I must, because all the others do." This was an *iron* penny. It was the gift of a cold, hard heart.

As a fourth boy dropped his penny in the box he shed a tear, and his heart said; "Poor heathen! I'm sorry they are so poor, so ignorant, and so miserable." This was a *silver* penny. It was the gift of a heart full of pity.

But there was one scholar who gave his penny with a throbbing heart, saying; "For thy sake, O loving Jesus! I give this penny." This was a *golden* penny, because it was the gift of love.

A penny is a small thing in the eyes of the world. The widow's mite was still smaller. "Christ wants a heart

beating like clock-work for him," and then the smallest service will be accepted.

"As the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand."

"Pure religion and undefiled," writes one,* "is ministering, not being ministered unto. It is handing over the morning paper to another for first perusal. It is vacating a pleasant seat by the fire for one who comes in chilled. It is giving up the most restful arm-chair or sofa-corner for one who is weary. It is 'moving up' in the pew to let the new-comer sit down by the entrance. It is rising from your place to darken the blind when the sun's ray streams in too brightly upon some face in the circle. It is giving your own comfort and convenience ev-

* Rev. A. L. Stone.

ery time for the comfort and convenience of another. This is at once true courtesy and real Christianity. If we mean to copy the spirit of the Master, we must be ready in every relation of life, and at every hour of the day, to give up being waited upon, and to practice this self-sacrificing, beneficent and ministering graciousness of spirit and conduct."

"And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house."

"Their sacrifice shall be accepted on mine altar."

We have somewhere read of a poor Arab who found a spring of water in the desert. Gathering up some of the precious, sparkling water, he hastened to bring it to his monarch. Weary and travel-stained he stood at length before the throne, and with eager, trembling hands presented his offering.

The monarch bowed his thanks, and drank with pleasant smile. Courtiers crowded round, asking to taste the wonderful water; but the king forbade their touching it to their lips.

The child of the desert departed with light step and glad heart: and then the king explained the reason why he would allow no one to taste the water. During the long journey it had become impure and brackish; but it was an offering of love, and as such the monarch received it with pleasure. "Had I suffered another to partake of it, he would not have concealed his disgust, and the heart of the poor man would have been wounded."

We are often reminded of this Arab when we see sacrifices made for Christ, which seem to many foolish and unnecessary. If the sacrifice is made in the right spirit, we are sure our King on

his throne will be no less considerate and appreciative than was the earthly monarch.

“And for the real love that was in it,
He will value this poor work of mine,
And because it was unto Him only,
Will crown it with plaudit divine!”

“Dear child! she wanted to help me,
I knew 'twas the best she could do.”

“And Jesus said.” . . . “She hath done what she could.”

“How wonderfully and beautifully our Lord responds to our poor little attempts to serve him.”

To those who are constrained by God's providence to live isolated or what they may call “commonplace lives,” we say: Cultivate a spirit of holiness, and a spirit of prayer. What the busy world has gained through the prayers of holy men in retirement perhaps we shall never know. But

we may know something of the power wielded in a home by a calm, peaceful soul, clothed in "the beauty of holiness." Your home may be very humble and obscure; but are there not some immortal beings in it who need your ministrations?

And as we have set forth Christ's three years of activity as an example to Christian workers, so we remind you of his thirty years in the obscurity of Nazareth.

"They also serve who only stand and wait," provided they wait patiently, prayerfully, and in strong faith.

Do you not know that the life speaks louder than the lips?

Paul at Athens finally directed the attention of his whole audience to Christ, though His name was not once mentioned in the whole speech. So though your lips may be dumb, and

your hands paralyzed, your life may direct the attention of many to Him who is the source of your strength.

Yes, without hesitation we say that the best way to serve Christ is to be like him.

We can not and would not if we could measure the service of any disciple: the measure is in the Master's hands: neither may we test the quality of that service. God forbid that we should "bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders," when the Lord who loves them has not laid them there. All we ask is: "What spirit or motive governs your life?"

For you know "we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh," but debtors to Christ, who died for all, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but

unto Him which died for them, and rose again." "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

Are you ministering in his name, and in his spirit? Remember all are not called to the same service. "To every man *his* work," not *your* work. The appointments are in the Master's hand, and "according to his ability" is his rule. He does not call all to Paul's place, though he calls all to imitate his spirit. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Or to change the language, there is Paul, establishing, strengthening and confirming churches in the once dark places of the earth; and here is John the beloved, alone and apparently unemployed on a desert island of the sea. There is Peter, and here Barnabas;

there Guthrie, and here Chalmers. There busy women whose names pass from lip to lip; here women who sit solitary, with bowed heads and folded hands, whose names find no echo on earth. There is Charlotte Elliot in her darkened chamber of suffering, and here is one by name unknown, stretched on a bed of pain, from which she shall never be lifted until carried out for burial.

And the work of each may be the same: "for the perfecting of the saints," "for the edifying of the body of Christ." "Every man shall give as he is able."

Paul, the unwearied worker, and John, the peerless among lovers, and Peter the bold speaker, and Chalmers and Guthrie, eloquent pleaders with dying men, and Charlotte Elliot, whose hymn from the darkened chamber shall help seeking sinners evermore, and

Helen Chalmers, with her gems from the lanes and byways; these, with a mighty multitude of kindred souls from all ages and climes will rejoice together when the top-stone is laid and the completed work praises the Master.

Art thou "called to be an apostle?" Do well the apostle's work. "Art thou called being a servant? care not for it." Only "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called:" and remember that in any lawful calling you may serve Christ. All are not called, like Pres. Finney, to abandon their professions, but all are called to glorify God in them.

We are told in regard to entering Mr. Talmage's College in Brooklyn, where laymen are trained for intelligent Christian work; "No qualification is necessary for entrance save a consecrated heart."

We frequently hear the queer expression; "Don't put yourself out." Our advice is: "*Do* put yourself out, and let Christ come in." The candle may well be put out if the noonday sun is shining. Let self be forgotten as far as it is possible.

"Come then, O my soul, and let me consecrate myself anew to my beloved Jesus. Jesus, Master, my Master, my great Master, come and take me, here and now, and make me all thine own."

"Saviour, come in, cleanse me from sin;
Jesus, my Saviour, come in, come in!
Enter the door, waiting no more;
Saviour, dear Saviour, come in."

"Then they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went."



XI.

REWARD OF WORK.

“Small gifts of self-denial,
These lowly widow-mites,
In the book of God’s remembrance
The recording angel writes;
It is lent unto the Master,
Who has promised to repay;
And the bread cast on the water,
Will return again some day.”

“**I**N the morning sow thy seed, and
in the evening withhold not thine
hand; for thou knowest not whether
shall prosper, either this or that, or
whether they both shall be alike good.”

“And whatsoever is right, I will
give you.”

Scarcely can we take up a religious paper without noticing how God accomplishes great things through feeble instrumentalities. One French soldier coming to his village home, after the last Franco-German war, brought with him a Testament. No one in the place had ever before seen God's word. The soldier did not hide his treasure, but holding it up before them all, besought them to send for copies of the precious word. They did so: and now the whole place is changed.

“I will cause them to know my might.”

Some laborers have the joy of seeing a speedy and abundant harvest follow the seed-sowing. Rev. Wm. Anderson of the U. P. Mission in Duke Town, West Africa, after twenty-five years of labor sees a neat church, a congregation gathered, and Sabbath

established by law: where once he witnessed heathen rites and human sacrifices. Abundant harvest follows his seed-sowing.

A young man returning to Oroomiah, Persia, from Russia, where he has received instruction from a Christian, reads the New Testament and proclaims his views to his friends and relatives. Twenty-five families withdraw from the synagogue, and solicit and obtain Christian instruction; meetings are established; converts multiply. The harvest is both speedy and abundant.

While in Geneva Mr. Sankey heard eight of his songs reproduced by the famous music-boxes of that ingenious city: and he brought home one, that his friends might be entertained by echoes of the great revival from the foot of the Alps.

Certainly it was pleasant for the evangelist so soon to hear the echoes of his revival melodies: for while "it is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord," after sowing Gospel seed, it is unspeakably joyful to see the quick upspringing of the tender blade, and hear the bursting of the buds of promise.

A missionary travelling in Madagascar came unexpectedly on a town where the people professed to be Christians, although surrounded by heathen tribes. He inquired how it happened, and learned that one of their number had been sent for treatment to a distant mission hospital, where he learned to read the Bible, and he carried home the precious truths of the Gospel. He soon persuaded his friends and neighbors to build him a chapel, and he in

time became the pastor of a Christian congregation.

Hear the results of an Indian woman's work.

She was a chieftess who came to live in Victoria, British Columbia.

Her people lived six hundred miles away. For seven years she attended regularly the Episcopal Church, all the time anxious about her soul; but no one ever invited her to come to Jesus. One day in passing an Indian Sabbath school she saw through the open door children at their lessons, and she asked a child at the door if she might come in. She entered: and there heard "the old, old story" of a crucified Saviour. It was good news to her: her heart was touched, and soon she learned to love and trust Jesus.

Now she longed for the salvation of her friends: nor did she waste her

time in longings. She went to work, and brought them in by scores: and many of them learned to love and trust Jesus.

Her son was hundreds of miles away; too far for her to go to him: but the distance that lay between them seemed not so great as the distance that seemed to lie between his nature and the divine: for he was a blood-thirsty cannibal! His mother had not seen him for years; and had long ago lost all influence over him. But she knew now the power of prayer, and on her knees she spent whole nights praying the Lord to bring her son to this Sunday school. What was the result? Moved by a power he understood not, this cannibal took his wife and uncle and started in his little canoe, on a journey of six hundred miles.

As soon as his mother saw him she

began to talk to him of Jesus, she led him into the Sunday school where at first he was displeased; but her faith failed not. He went again, and heard Amos, the degraded, flat-headed Indian pray. He trembled with astonishment. His mother, who can not read, begged him to read to her the fourteenth chapter of John. He did so; and his heart melted, and as she explained to him the way of salvation, the cannibal came into the open arms of Christ.

He then begged for some one to go back with him to his tribe. As soon as a missionary was promised him, he started back to tell his people of the sufferings of Christ on the cross for them. He led about five hundred of those wild cannibals to the foot of the cross. When the missionary (Mr. Polard) some time after went among them, they met him twelve miles below the

landing, and took him off the steamboat on board their war canoe; and it was hours before he was through shaking hands with them, for every one of them insisted upon shaking his hand.

This was more than two years ago. The good work goes on, and many are turning to the Lord. As soon as these heathen are converted they bring their idols to Mr. Pollard.

“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

Hear some of the results of another woman's work.

Mrs. Bartlett, who has now entered into rest, was called seventeen years ago to teach three young women in Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's Sabbath school. She shrank even from this humble, quiet work, and finally, after many misgivings, consented to try it for a month. At the end of that time she

was persuaded to be a permanent teacher, and she consented *in expressed reliance on God's sustaining grace.*

From three her class grew until the average attendance was from six to seven hundred. Nearly one thousand instructed by her united with Mr. Spurgeon's church, while many are scattered in different churches.

“Yet Mrs. Bartlett was neither a profound scholar nor a woman of remarkable ability in any one direction. She was simply a consecrated worker, doing faithfully that to which God called her, in implicit trust on his promises.”

Such results are gratifying and encouraging; but they are not given to all. Why not? We can not tell. We have sometimes thought the greatness of our spiritual pride was the cause of the apparent failure of our work. If our work was established as we de-

sire, we might look upon it with a feeling akin to one of old who said: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?"

"But," you reason, "it is God's work, and we are doing it for his honor and glory." It may be so: and yet why question his dealings? His way is always best; his children find it so. "Go work in my vineyard," is his command. Leave all the rest with him. The delay in blessing may be designed to lead to greater faith and earnestness. It may also lead you to inquire if you are laboring in the right place. "Ponder the path of thy feet," and pray: "Lead me in a plain path."

Try to find out the place and the work for which you are best fitted. "Know thyself." With all earnestness and sincerity you may be toiling all the night, and taking nothing; and

those around you may see that of which they can not speak. Admiring your faithfulness and self-sacrifice they have not the heart to tell you that you are the wrong man for the place you are trying to fill.

After Benhadad the Syrian king had sustained a serious defeat his servants offered him this advice in regard to the reorganizing of his army: "Take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put captains in their room." Certainly the advice was judicious; though nothing could save an army appointed by the Lord for destruction.

Are you willing even to be supplanted in order that the Lord's work may prosper? It is a hard thing I know to stand aside and see another succeeding where you have failed. Not every one can say with quiet content:

“He must increase, but I must decrease.” Yet if the kings lose the battle, try the captains: for the work of the Lord must not cease.

“Perhaps I am the wrong man here,” tearfully said a minister of Christ to me. “To give up this little church would be like leaving the little baby you nourished and tended,” added the devoted wife. And then the husband bravely said: “If I leave here I will go to — ;” mentioning a still harder field of labor.

God increase the number of such Christians! It is our joy and strength to number such among our friends.

“Why do you work beyond your strength? Don’t you know your *willingness to do* will bring you as rich a reward as the services you are scarcely strong enough to perform?” There was a visible shrinking on the part of

the Christian addressed, as the low answer came: "I was not thinking of the reward."

A noble ship was bearing down on the English coast under a stiff breeze and a lowering sky. It was not many hours before she was in the teeth of a violent storm, rolling and plunging in the angry waters. The wind shrieked through her cordage, and her huge timbers groaned from stem to stern. She struck at last, and became unmanageable, and hoisted signals of distress. A crew of brave and hardy men from the shore put out to rescue her living freight.

Among those on board was a negro with two orphan children under his charge. The boat was soon filled with the terror-stricken passengers, and there was room for but *one more*—room for the negro, or the two little children.

Who should be saved? who be left to perish? The faithful negro did not hesitate. Over the ship's side he lowered the helpless children into the lifeboat, only calling out: "Tell Massa, Cuffie did his duty."

"So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do."

Nevertheless the Master holds out rewards to us, and permits us to anticipate them.

A little child read aloud the illuminated motto hanging on our wall: "God's work pays sure wages." "How does he pay us?" we inquired. "Oh! he gives us heaven!" she answered as she skipped around the room. "Yes, but how does he pay us *now*?" we asked. And the simple, beautiful an-

swer came quickly: "Oh he pays us in love every day."

"My niece and I waded to church last winter through snow-drifts up to our waists, carrying by turns our little boy;" said a minister's wife to me. "And we never took cold. We sat in our wet clothes through service, and dried them when we came home." "I should think under such circumstances you would have but one service," I remarked. "Oh no," she answered: "we want to occupy the whole day so that none can have an excuse for staying away."

Truly concerning such we can say: "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."

"Love every day" is a sweet payment: and "he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all

thy ways" is a comforting promise to those whose path of duty leads through great peril. But listen to this promise: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

To see on earth the results of our labor is inexpressibly delightful: for "the desire accomplished is sweet to the soul."

In Dr. Guggenhuhl's institution for the cure of cretins a series of strange pictures hang on the walls. The picture of each unfortunate child is taken upon entering the institution; and after years of care and instruction the picture is again taken. What a comfort it must be to the patient teachers to look first on one then on the other picture, and feel that under God *they* have wrought this great result.

“I was present at a graduation ceremonial in the University of Edinburgh,” writes Dr. Guthrie, “when there came forward to be ‘capped’ (that is, to receive the degree), ministers as doctors of divinity, lawyers and litterateurs as doctors of law, others still as doctors of medicine, and lastly a number of fine-looking young men as masters of arts. Who was there, think you? I never was so affected all my days. It took me by surprise, and, I am not ashamed to confess it, it brought tears to my eyes, for I saw among those ‘capped’ that day, as master of arts, *a youth who had been one of my Ragged-school boys.*”

One of the happiest evenings of an unusually happy life was spent by him in giving a reception to his former pupils: “Sober, well-to-do-like young men and women,” once Ragged-school

boys and girls. "It was a marvellous sight!" wrote this noble-hearted servant of Christ. I was ready to ask, "Are these my Ragged-school children? 'The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad.'"

"We lingered over the scene. It was a sight worth living for. It was our Harvest Home. Our joy was according to the joy of harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil."

And we think his glad spirit must have lingered near, when over his open grave two hundred and thirty pupils from the Ragged Schools sang:

"There is a happy land, far, far away."

If the shepherd at Ephesus received the name of Evangelist (giver of glad tidings), and also divine honors, for revealing to his fellow-citizens his dis-

covery of marble, what honors, think you, shall be paid to one who wielding the hammer of God's word with the strong arm of faith, breaks through the thick crust of ignorance and vice, and discloses "man made in the image of God?"

The apparent results of our work form part of the present reward, but what shall the future be? "What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honor?"

In Belgium, we are told, instead of trusting to private benevolence or private societies, to reward acts of courage, devotion and humanity, the state undertakes the pleasant duty, and makes the distribution of medals an interesting ceremony to add to the pomps of a fete day. The honors are bestowed in the presence of a great assembly, in the Temple des Augus-

tines, in Brussels. The minister of the Interior presides, and the royal family by their presence add to the imposing spectacle: while officers of rank, in uniform, fill the high seats beside the platform. One who once witnessed it gives us a brief account.

The first to receive a large gold medal was a boy twelve years of age. Trying to save his little sister from a horrible death, he was so severely burned that his scars will be the life-long memorial of his bravery. As he received the golden medal surmounted with the royal crown the applause of the assembled multitude testified their high appreciation of his act of heroism.

Others followed to receive their reward. One boy had rescued a child from drowning. A nun had saved an infant from a burning house. But

“the time would fail me to tell of” all. We would like to have been present at that beautifully suggestive ceremony. We hope to share in one of which this is but a faint image.

Unwilling to trust the rewards to other hands our Master himself presents our rewards. Sometimes I think we will be almost ashamed to receive them. Looking back over our past lives it seems to me we will be overwhelmed with the smallness of our services when we fully realize what Christ has done for us.

“When I stand before the throne,
Clothed in beauty not my own;
When I see thee as thou art,
Love thee with unchanging heart;
Then Lord shall I fully know
Not till then how much I owe.”

Our Master presents our rewards; and he himself is our reward. Oh

what is our crown compared with our Christ!

A sister once waited anxiously the return of a dear brother, after a long separation. They met: hand clasped hand, and tearful eyes exchanged glances full of affection. After the first embrace the brother placed in his sister's hand a gift brought from afar. Acting upon a sudden impulse she thrust it from her, saying: "Take it away; I do not want it. I have you!"

Perhaps we will have something of this feeling when Jesus offers us the crown.

"And what shall I more say?" O blood-bought and redeemed disciple, consider the necessity, the beauty and the reasonableness of the service required. Have "respect unto the recompense of the reward"; the reward present and future: and let this ser-

vice, from this time forth, be your delight.

“Servants of Christ!” The subject grows upon us. The honor seems greater while we meditate upon it. But what means this word of our Lord: “I have called you friends!”

To be his servant was a greater dignity than we thought ourselves worthy to bear: but as though this was a small thing in his sight he spake these wonderful words: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

“Mary! She turned herself and said unto him, Rabboni.” “Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth.” “Not now as a servant, but above a servant,” I am ready to do thy bidding, for the thought of this intimate friendship inspires me with fresh energy and courage.

“He does not want to make slaves

of us, but dear children, entering into his plans, cheerfully accepting what each hour brings.”

Lord, if thou art willing to receive me as a co-laborer, I, by the help of thy grace, accept thy service.

“Now I resolve with all my heart,
With all my powers to serve the Lord;
Nor from his ways will I depart,
Whose service is a rich reward.

“O, be this service all my joy!
Around let my example shine;
Till others love the blest employ,
And join in labors so divine.

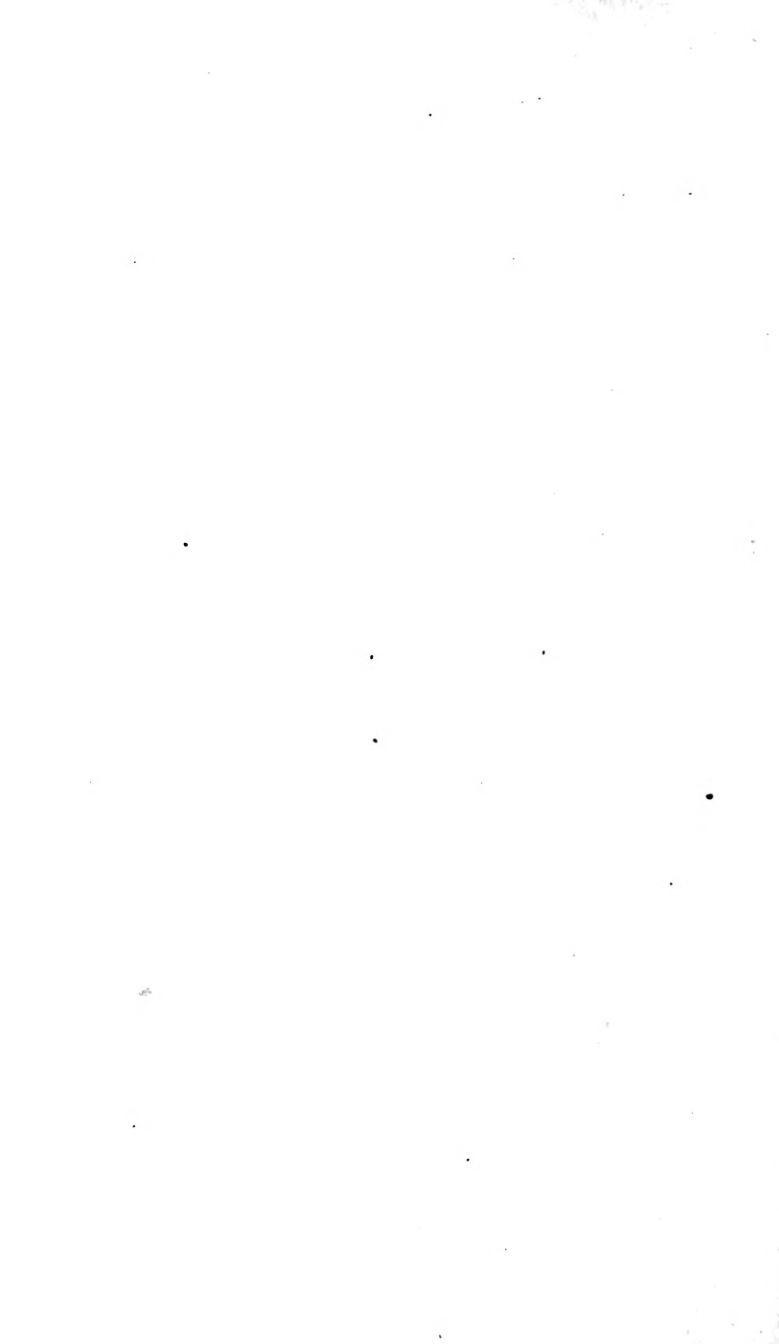
“Be this the purpose of my soul,
My solemn, my determined choice,
To yield to his supreme control,
And in his kind commands rejoice.

“O may I never faint nor tire,
Nor wandering, leave his sacred ways;
Great God! accept my soul's desire,
And give me strength to live thy praise.”

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

“Now unto the King Eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory, forever and ever. Amen.”





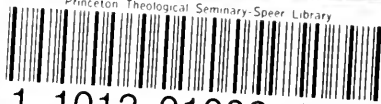


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